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The Measures of the Poets

M. A. BAYFIELD

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THE MEASURES OF THE POETS

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THE MEASURES OF THE POETS

A NEW SYSTEM OF ENGLISH PROSODY

Matthew Albert

BY

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PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is to assist both students and lovers of poetry in general towards such a complete enjoyment of the beauty and music of English verse as can only be attained through a clear comprehension of its metrical framework; that is to say, a knowledge of the measures in which it is composed and the scansional schemes on which these are based. If this end is to be achieved, it is unquestionable that we must have a system of prosody that is on the one hand sound in principle, and on the other not liable to break down when brought to the test of application. Incredible as it may seem, no complete system has yet been put forth, so far as I can discover, which fulfils either of these indispensable conditions. In his book, *The Science of English Verse*, published some forty years ago—a book which unfortunately I did not hear of until the present work was written—the American poet and musician Sidney Lanier advocated the trochaic base for our lyrics, but strangely enough retained the iambic base for blank verse. English books on the subject still continue to adopt the iambic base, even for lyrics, and accordingly the system put forth in these pages is, so far as the systems in vogue are concerned, altogether revolutionary. The attempt to sweep away entirely a prosody which has been accepted, though with steadily growing dissatisfaction, for several centuries, may appear at first sight not a little presumptuous; yet, as I have shown elsewhere*, not only was a thorough reformation needed, but also

* See "Our Traditional Prosody and an Alternative" in *The Modern Language Review*, April, 1918, and *The Times* Literary Supplement, Jan. 30 and Feb. 13, 1919.

the task of a reformer was by no means difficult. For while the system generally received and taught, which is founded on the traditional iambic base, can readily be shown to rest on radical misconceptions of the whole matter and to break down at every turn when tested by the work of the poets, with the adoption of the trochaic base, as here proposed, every feature and variation of the verse is seen to have arisen naturally and easily, and nothing is left unexplained.

It may be added that this book is the outcome of an accidental discovery, made with great surprise about three years ago, that works on English prosody still adopt a system which even at school filled us with despair, and which I believe to be incapable of reasoned defence. It is now some forty-five years since I first began to apply the principles here set forth to English verse. I have taught them to pupils and found they were quickly grasped, and have sought in vain to discover a point on which they fail.

I have to thank the editor of *The Modern Language Review* for permission to reproduce portions of the article referred to above.

M. A. B.

February, 1919.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY: SYMBOLS, FEET, AND MEASURES

PROSODY is the art or science, so to call it, which treats of the laws and principles of verse and versification; but before it can be studied profitably we must have a definite conception of what is meant by verse. Though we know that "what is not prose is verse, and what is not verse is prose," we have yet to ask, if we would go further than M. Jourdain, what is that essential quality of verse which distinguishes it from prose? The fundamental difference between the two may be stated thus: in verse the stresses on the words *must recur at regular intervals*, whereas in prose they must not, at least to any considerable extent. Thus, if I write, "The author often gives his sentences an even beat that irritates the ear; he does not seem to have grasped the difference that marks off verse from prose, and prose from verse," I have in fact written four lines of blank verse, however bad they may be,—and at the same time bad prose, because the natural stresses recur at regular intervals. With a change in their positions we at once get prose: "The sentences so frequently run with the evenly-falling beat of verse that they vex the ear; the author has apparently failed to grasp the essential difference between verse and prose." The importance of this definition, or partial definition, of verse will appear later, when we examine the traditional system of English prosody.

Verse further differs from prose in that it is divided into certain definite lengths, each of which constitutes what is called

a 'measure' or 'verse' or 'line of verse.' The line itself is divided into metrical units called 'feet*,' each of which, in triple-time measures, normally (but only normally) contains one stressed and one unstressed syllable, and the number of feet in a line is counted by the number of normally stressed syllables. Thus the lines,

Quíps and | Cránks and | wánton | Wíles, ∧ ‖
Nóds and | Bécks and | wréathed | Smíles, ∧ ‖

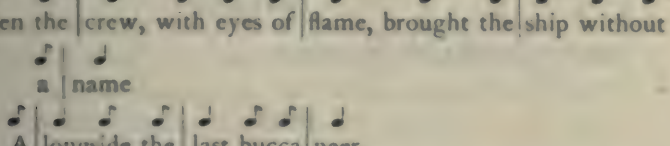
have four feet each. The last foot of each is, however, not completed, and the sign ∧ marks a pause of the length of an unstressed syllable.

The stressed syllable of a foot almost always takes a longer time to say than the unstressed one. Sometimes much more, sometimes only a little more time is taken, but on the average about twice as much†, and accordingly the quantitative notation used in Greek and Latin prosody has usually been adopted for English verse. The longer or stressed syllable is marked by the sign –, the shorter (conventionally regarded as having half the duration of the long) by the sign ⏑; or the crotchet (♩) and quaver (♪) of music may be used. The normal foot of our verse, –⏑, is called a *trochee*; it is to be noted that the stressed syllable comes first. The combination ⏑–, which cannot form a metrical foot, because the stressed syllable does not come first, is called an *iambus*. It has been urged against this notation, that in English poetry the dominating factor is stress, not quantity. That this is so, cannot be doubted; but in spite of determined efforts I have found it undesirable, and indeed impossible, to discard the notation. However conventional it may be when applied to our verse, it is far the most convenient for exposition,

* The word 'measure' is also often employed for convenience to describe a metrical foot, but the double sense causes no ambiguity.

† This has recently been proved by experiments made with an elaborated phonograph, which records, to minute fractions of a second, the time taken to deliver each syllable.

and is indispensable for contrasting, as will occasionally be necessary, the traditional system with that set forth here. If it is remembered that – denotes a stressed but not necessarily long syllable (as in "Elaine the | *lóvable*"), and ⏑ an unstressed one not necessarily short (as *capp'd* in "cloúd-capp'd | tówers"), no misunderstanding can result. In showing the scansion of a line it will not as a rule be necessary to do more than mark the foot-divisions, adding stress marks where required*. That the ear recognises the bulk of our verse to be in what musicians call triple time, is undeniable. No one can fail to perceive the difference between the comparatively rare 4-time rhythm of such lines as



and the fundamentally triple movement of all but a few of our verse measures, however it may be modified in particular feet. The following quotations illustrate the usual movement.

Sport, that | wrinkled | Care derides,
And | Laughter, | holding | both his | sides.

The | glories | of our | blood and | state
Are | shadows, | not substantial | things.

The | evil | that men | do lives | after | them,
The | good is | oft interrèd | with their | bones.

We may now proceed to details.

* Since it will occasionally be convenient to use the musical notation, I give it here. The *crotchet* ♩ = 2 *quavers* (♪♪ or ♫). = 4 *semiquavers* (♬ or 𝅘𝅥𝅯𝅘𝅥𝅯𝅘𝅥𝅯𝅘𝅥𝅯). A note followed by a dot becomes half as long again: thus ♩. = ♪♩, and ♫. (1½, ½, 1, the notation for *furioso*), = ♫. (the notation for *merrily*).

§ 1. SYMBOLS.

The following symbols are used in this book.

⏑ denotes a short syllable (♪), and ⏑⏑ two half-shorts (♬).

– „ „ long syllable musically equivalent to two shorts (𝅗𝅥 = ♬).

⏖ „ „ syllable prolonged to the length of three shorts (𝅗𝅥. = ♬♪).

> „ an 'irrational' long that is a long syllable counting as a short.

∧ „ the omission of a short syllable.

⏓ „ „ „ „ long syllable.

⏔ „ „ „ „ two longs.

The sign ⁞ marks off the upbeat.

§ 2. FEET.

All known metrical feet, sometimes called 'measures,' were invented by the Greeks. Since their lyric verse was always intended to be sung to music, their prosody naturally includes many kinds of feet (equivalent to possible varieties of bars of music) which ours does not. The following alone are used in English poetry.

Quadruple Measure (that is, sung or said in quadruple time):

Anapaest, ⏑⏑–, a foot with a weaker second stress on the second half. By syncopation (compression) of the shorts it may take the form ⏓–; by 'resolution' (breaking-up) of the long it may become ⏑⏑⏑⏑, and by the two processes combined it may become ⏓⏑⏑. It is in the last three forms that it most commonly appears both in Greek and English verse; the form ⏑⏑– is rare. In the form –⏑⏑ it is indistinguishable from the true dactyl, for which see under Triplet Dactyl below.

Triple Measures (that is, sung or said in triple time):

1. *Trochee*, ⏑ ◡ (♩ ♪), the staple foot of the bulk of English verse.

2. *Tribrach*, ◡ ◡ ◡, produced by resolution or breaking-up of the long of the trochee into two shorts. The terms 'resolution' and 'resolved foot' will be frequently used in this sense. The word *tribrach* means 'having three shorts.'

3. *Triplet Dactyl*, ⏑ ◡, produced by resolving the quantities of the trochee (2. 1) into 1½, ½, 1 as ♪♪♪=♩ ♪. This foot is to be distinguished from the true dactyl used by Homer and Vergil, which is a 4-time measure with two stresses, ⏑ ◡ ◡. This true dactyl becomes by syncopation the *spondee* ⏑ ⏑. Neither of these last is used in English, but the use of the 'irrational long' (that is, a long syllable occurring where the normal scheme demands a short) often produces a foot which is in effect indistinguishable from the spondee, as in "the | *lóng nights* | black."

4. *Quadrisyllabic Foot*. The trochee is frequently resolved into a foot with four syllables, as in music four quavers may replace a triplet. Even quinquesyllabic feet occur, though very rarely.

5. *Ionic*, ⏑ ⏑ ◡ ◡, a 3/4 time foot, with a secondary stress on the second long almost equal to that on the first (♩ ♩ ♪♪).

6. *Ditrochee*, ⏑ ◡ – ◡. The second long has only a secondary stress, if any.

The following, which do not occur in English verse, are added because they are mentioned in the course of the work.

Iambus, ◡ –. This is not used as a metrical foot in English. The Greeks appear to have employed it occasionally, but only with the stress on the first syllable, ⏑ –.

Cretic or *First Paeon*, ⏑ ◡ ⏑, a quintuple measure. Though found in Greek as a metrical foot, it is never so used in English;

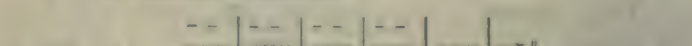
as a *unit of rhythm*, however, it is frequent in our verse. The measure is occasionally used in modern music, as in Chopin's Vth Nocturne.

Choriambus. See below under Measures (8), p. 10.

§ 3. MEASURES*.

(A) **Quadruple Measures.**

1. *The Classical Hexameter:*



This 6-foot measure consists of true dactyls and spondees, and occasionally even the fifth foot is a spondee. The Homeric poems were recited in a sort of chant in quadruple time, but there is reason to suppose that the Latin hexameter may have been said in triple time, as we say it. In English, in which the measure is always in triple time, it is difficult to handle, and from the absence of upbeat and for other reasons, is liable to become tiresome and monotonous. Longfellow's *Evangeline* is an example:

This is the | forest prim eval; the | murmuring | pines and the | hemlocks.

2. *The Anapaestic Measure.* The line may be of any length from one to four feet, and always takes upbeat. The measure is illustrated in ch. VI. It would be improper to regard the examples there as written in dactylic measure, because the first syllable of the true dactyl is never resolved. For the various forms of the anapaest see § 2 above.

(B) **Triple Measures.**

1. *Dipodies*, *Tripodies*, and *Tetrapodies*, used commonly in lyrics and occasionally in blank verse.

* A measure of one foot is called a Monopody, of two a Dipody, of three a Tripody, of four a Tetrapody, of five a Pentapody, of six an Alexandrine (or hexameter), of seven a Heptameter, of eight an Octapody.

2. *The Heroic Line* used in blank verse. This is a 5-foot line, which may be either 'full,'

$$\smile : - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \parallel ^{*},$$

It : was the | owl that | shriek'd, the | fatal | bellman ‖,

or 'checked,' that is, with the last foot incomplete,

$$\smile : - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \wedge \parallel,$$

Me:thought I | heard a | voice cry | 'Sleep no | more!' ∧ ‖.

In its normal form it takes an upbeat, but this is frequently omitted, in which case the first foot is usually resolved:

Why did you | bring these | daggers | from the | place? ∧ ‖.

3. *The Iambic.* This is a Greek measure of 6 feet, admitting 'irrational' longs and resolutions. It is always found in the checked form, and the upbeat, which is sometimes disyllabic, is never omitted. The name, which means *The Flinger*, was given to it because the first poems written in lines of this length in triple measure were scurrilous compositions of invective and abuse,—mud-flingers. The word *iambus* originally described the whole line, and probably came to denote the sequence of syllables $\smile -$ because the line so begins. The normal scheme of the line is $\smile : - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \wedge \parallel$.

The Iambic line corresponds to our heroic line in being the staple measure of Greek Tragedy and Comedy. From a failure to distinguish between Metre and Rhythm, it was in Roman times, when Greek prosody was little understood, supposed to be composed of iambi, $\smile \acute{-} \mid \smile \acute{-} \mid$ etc. To this fundamental error, which was shared and handed down by Horace (*Ars Poet.* 251 ff.), and blindly accepted by the literary world at the Revival of Learning, the present hopeless condition of English prosody is largely if not entirely due. For Greek and Latin

* Stress being the dominating factor in English verse, the long marks (-) merely indicate the position of stress. The syllable may be actually short, and the syllable in the place of no stress may be actually long,—an 'irrational.'

verse the mistaken view was corrected as much as fifty years ago by J. H. H. Schmidt in his works on the Rhythmic and Metric of the classical languages.

4. *The Alexandrine.*

This, the modern 6-foot line is so called, either because it was used in the old French *Roman d'Alexandre*, or from the name of one Alexandre de Bernay, who wrote a continuation of that poem. For French Tragedy it is the staple measure and is commonly used by the French for other poems; in English, though frequently used for variety in lyrics and blank verse, it is otherwise comparatively rare. Browning, however, employs it for a long poem, *Fifine at the Fair*. In Shakespeare there are far fewer instances than are commonly supposed, for many lines which might appear to have 6 feet are really full 5-foot lines with the last foot resolved, as

My ⋮ lord, I | came to | see your | father's | funeral ‖.

The earlier writers made a point of breaking the line after the third stress, but unless the position of the pause is varied, it becomes extremely monotonous. The measure normally takes upbeat. (See further in Appendix I, A.)

5. *The Hendecasyllabic* (i.e. eleven-syllabled).

This is a pentapody without upbeat, and with the second foot (only and always) resolved:

$$- \cup \mid \sim \cup \mid - \cup \mid - \cup \mid - \cup \|.$$

Although it is a rhythm into which the line of the *Divina Commedia* frequently falls, and our own blank verse now and then by a rare accident, it is not easy to write continuously. Tennyson has left a fairly successful specimen in the little poem beginning,

O you | *chorus of* | indolent reviewers, ‖
Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,
Look, I *come to the* test, a tiny poem
All composed *in a* metre of Catullus.

Swinburne in his poem *Hendecasyllabics* is less happy; for owing to the multiplication of consonants the lines as a whole lack the lightness and delicacy of movement which the measure demands. The following three, however, could not be bettered:

> Till I heard as it were a noise of waters
> Moving tremulous under feet of angels
> Multitudinous, out of all the heavens.

When a Greek measure is employed in English verse the triplet dactyl of the original is often replaced by some other form of the trisyllabic foot.

6. *The Ionic.* This is a Greek measure expressive of lively excitement, whether joyous or the reverse. The staple foot is the *ionic* ⏑⏑– –, but this is frequently combined with the *ditrochee* ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑, which is also equivalent to six shorts. The measure then takes the form which Browning has adopted for the Epilogue to *Asolando*, though there, owing to the peacefulness of the subject, the agitation that it is capable of expressing cannot be perceived. A stanza from the Epilogue, with the scansion, is given at the end of ch. VI, p. 82.

7. *The Galliambic.* This is a wild tumultuous measure, originally Greek, used especially for the poems sung to the Asiatic goddess Cybele by her priests, who were called *Galli*. In its pure form it consists of two ionic dipodies with upbeat, the third foot being usually resolved to ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑:

⏑ ⏑ | ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ | ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ | ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ | – ⏓ ‖.

The only complete poem extant in the metre is the *Attis* of Catullus, who employs the mixed ionic just mentioned under (6):

⏑ ⏑ | ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ | ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ | – ⏓,

Super | alta vectus | Attis celeri rate maria ⏓ ‖.

The measure is mentioned here only because Tennyson, attempting the impossible, has endeavoured to reproduce it in his *Boadicea*. Unfortunately the original is barely recognisable

in the transformation; no ionic foot survives, and he has changed the disyllabic upbeat into an extra foot. This, with a resolution of the first long of the first ionic (the *At-* of *Attis* above) and an improper scansion of the end of the Latin line as | -l ra|té mari|á, gives us what is in fact nothing but an 8-foot trochaic freely resolved. It is only in the resolutions at the end of the line that the poem reflects something of the passion of its model,—that is, from a metrical point of view; for regarded simply as a poem and taken as a whole, it undoubtedly has all the fire and energy of the galliambic.

These have | told us | all their | anger | in mi|raculous | utteran|ces,
Thunder, a | flying | fire in | heaven, a | murmur | heard a|erial|ly,
Phantom | sounds of | blows de|scending, | moan of an | enemy | massacr|ed,
Phantom | wail of | women and | children, | multi|tudinous | ago|nies.

Possibly the two last lines are meant for heptapodies ending | *massacred* ‖ and | *agonies* ‖.

8. *The Choriambic.*

This measure, usually a tripody, was composed of choriambi. The choriambus is a foot of 3/4 time (♩♫♩) with a strong secondary stress on the last syllable, ⏑ ∪ ∪ –, and the measure was used to express violent emotion, as of alarm, grief, or indignation. Swinburne, while under the impression that he was employing it in his poem *Choriambics*—from which, by the way, excitement is entirely absent—has in fact adopted a measure that is altogether different, the *Greater Asclepiad* (cp. Horace, *Carm.* i. 11). No doubt he scanned his line

– ∪ | – ∪ ∪ – | – ∪ ∪ – | – ∪ ∪ – | ∪ – ‖,

but this produces a metre not only unknown, but for several reasons impossible. Notwithstanding this mistake about its

scansion, he has handled the Asclepiad with absolute correctness, and produced a poem which is at once of great beauty and a triumph of skill; in no single case is a false emphasis given to the words that form the monosyllabic feet. I quote the first and last couplets; the true scansion is

$$- \cup \mid \sim \cup \mid \llcorner \parallel \sim \cup \mid \llcorner \parallel \sim \cup \mid - \cup \mid - \wedge \parallel,$$

but in Swinburne's poem the resolved foot is sometimes a tribrach ($\cup\cup\cup$) or $\angle \sim$.

Love, what | ailed thee to | leave || life that was | made || lovely,
we | thought, with | love?
What sweet | visions of | sleep || lured thee a way, || down from
the | light above?

* * * * *

Nay then, | sleep if thou | wilt; || love is con|tent; || what should
he | do to | weep?
Sweet was | love to thee | once; || now in thine | eyes || sweeter
than | love is | sleep.

9. *The Sapphic* and *Alcaic*. For these see ch. VII, p. 94 f.

Short Table of Lyric Measures.

The following Table, which will be discussed in ch. V, is placed here also in order to give completeness to the present chapter. Though simple, it comprehends all the lyric measures used by the English poets, except those which are purely classical, but includes all imitations of these last which do not accurately preserve the forms of their originals.

(A) Triple Measures:

1. *Trochaic*: (*a*) without upbeat; (*b*) admitting upbeat. This measure is rarely found in lines of more than 4 feet. Both forms of it admit resolved feet, though in its purest form (*a*) it shows none.

2. *Anacrustic*: measures with upbeat (*anacrusis*) in their normal form, but often omitting it, and with only infrequent resolutions.

3. *Dactylic**: measures with frequent resolutions, with or without upbeat, which, if present, is often double.

Measures belonging to (2) and (3) may be of any length up to 8 feet. Lines in triple measure may be checked or full, but the former type is by far the more common. Any line, however, may be given full measure at will.

(B) **Quadruple Measure**:

4. *Anapaestic*: in which the true 4-time anapaest is used. The measure does not exceed 4 feet in length, and the line is always checked.

Measures of 7 feet are not uncommon, but measures of 8 feet are rare, since most poets, and most readers also, find so long a line unsatisfactory. Swinburne, however, has a liking for them, and is perhaps the only poet besides Tennyson who has successfully overcome the difficulties which they present. The superiority of his line, which is more musical than Tennyson's, appears to be due to his inexhaustible vocabulary and quite faultless ear for rhythm. I give a specimen from *March: an Ode.*

Fain, : fain but again would we | see for an | hour what the | wind and the | sun have dispelled and consumed, ∧ ||
Those : full deep swan-soft feathers of snow with whose luminous burden the branches implumed
Hung : heavily, curved as a half-bent bow, and fledged not as birds are, but petalled as flowers,
Each : tree-top and branchlet a pinnacle jewelled and carved, or a fountain that shines as it showers.

* This designation indicates the triplet dactyl; we have no measures which employ the true 4-time dactyl.

CHAPTER II

METRE AND RHYTHM

METRE and Rhythm, although intimately connected and possessing elements in common, are yet quite distinct, and the importance of recognising this fact cannot be exaggerated.

Metre is derived from the Greek *μέτρον*, which means *measure*, and we use both words to describe the quantitative framework on which a verse of poetry is constructed. The total length of this framework is divided into metrical units called 'feet,' *each of which has the same time-value.* The unit of the foot is the short syllable (⏑). The word 'measure' is sometimes used to describe a whole line, as when we speak of a '5-foot measure,' and sometimes it is used of a single foot, as for instance the trochee, which is called a 'triple measure' because it is equivalent to three shorts. Certain variations from the plain norm of the 5-foot line were regarded by the Greeks as different metres; thus of the following schemes (*a*) is the Hendecasyllabic and (*b*) the Sapphic:

(*a*) – ⏑ | ⏑⏑ | – ⏑ | – ⏑ | – ⏑ ‖ .

(*b*) – ⏑ | – ⏑ | ⏑⏑ | – ⏑ | – ⏑ ‖ .

But if we add an upbeat to (*b*) and do not complete the last foot, we get the Alcaic,

(*c*) ⏑ ⁝ – ⏑ | – ⏑ | ⏑⏑ | – ⏑ | – x ‖ .

These changes of metre of course produce changes of rhythm, but each metre is capable of several varieties of rhythm, as will be shown below. All these three Greek measures are forms which our heroic line sometimes assumes.

The Latin *scansio*, which properly means the act of *climbing* (*a-scend-ing*) and is the original of our word *scansion*, was apparently first connected with verse by a Grammarian named Diomedes who lived towards the end of the 4th century A.D. Thinking perhaps of the steps of a staircase or ladder, he used it to denote the *marking-off of metrical measures into units*; the term was adopted by Bede, and so passed into our language. Of course the Greeks had scanned their lines a thousand years before Diomedes; I am only speaking of the use of this particular word.

Rhythm[*] is derived from a Greek word (ῥυθμός, connected with our verb *rush*) denoting *movement in regular succession*, or *a succession of regular movements*; thus the pendulum of a clock and a dancer's feet move in rhythm. As applied to verse, the word usually denotes the movement, the mode of progression, of a line as a whole. This total of movement is made up of units of rhythm, which are of various kinds and lengths like the steps of an elaborate dance. Some are identical with the six admissible metrical feet, – ⏑, ⏑ ⏑, ⏑⏑⏑, – ⏑⏑, and the monosyllabic and quadrisyllabic; but just as the groups of steps in such a dance do not tally precisely with the bars of the music, so other rhythmical units are altogether independent of the foot-divisions, as ⏑ ⏓, ⏑ ⏓ ⏑, ⏓ ⏑ ⏓, ⏑ ⏑ ⏓ (*delight*, *delightful*, *discontent*, *with a cry*), etc. Indeed it is no small part of the poet's art to see that his units of rhythm shall not correspond too frequently with the metrical feet. At the same time the units of rhythm must be so adjusted to each other that the whole can be *re-divided* into units of metre, each of which, as has been said, must have the same time-value, whereas the units of rhythm

[*] *Rhythm* is in no way connected with *rhyme*, although from the association of both with verse, it has corrupted the spelling of the latter word. *Rhyme* is of Teutonic origin, and was originally spelt *rime*, a spelling to which many modern writers have rightly returned.

need not. This re-division is the function of scansion, which, though it is partly guided by the word-groupings on which sense and rhythm so largely depend, proceeds on principles of its own. Further, the stresses of the metrical units must recur at regular intervals, or they will fail to admit and account for the rhythms of the verse. This is just what our traditional scheme fails to do; it does not measure, because, as we shall see later, its stresses do not recur at regular intervals and its feet are not of equivalent value. It is as useless for that purpose as would be a foot-rule divided into uneven spaces. To look at the matter from the opposite point of view, a poet may take a measure and write to it, introducing units of rhythm quite diverse from those of the measure, and different ones in different lines, for the same metre is capable of many various rhythms; but if, when his verse is scanned, his rhythms do not fit the measure perfectly, with the stresses falling as the measure demands, he has written what we call an unmetrical line.

It is obvious that the very diversity of the rhythmical units makes it impossible to use rhythm as the basis of a metrical scheme; but at the same time it is only through a delicate appreciation of the interplay between the two that justice can be done to a poet's work. Effective delivery combines them. The first care of a good reader or reciter is of course to break up the lines not into their metrical, but their rhythmical units, which, as said above, may or may not coincide with the metrical feet. He is guided to the rhythmical units by the sense and natural grouping of the words, by the necessary pauses (often not marked by printed stops), and by the requirements of just and scrupulously graded emphasis. Nevertheless a knowledge of the metre and scansion of the verse is an invaluable, and indeed indispensable assistance to him for its proper musical delivery, as opposed to the utterance of it as so much prose. For while he gives the verse its natural movement or rhythm in the manner described, assigning to individual words the same

relative stress as they would have in ordinary speech, and although he often cuts the metrical foot in two, making pauses for which no provision can be made by the bare scansional scheme, he will contrive to leave on the ear the impression that he is speaking in *measure*,—that is, that the rhythms succeed each other in obedience to a certain law, and not as those of prose, which are independent of such control.

It has been supposed that a particular metrical scheme imposes a particular rhythm, but this is not the case. It can do no more than exclude certain rhythms, leaving the poet to choose between those that remain. Let us suppose a young student to be asked to write four lines in our heroic measure: (*a*) a line in the measure's plainest form, (*b*) one with an Alcaic rhythm, (*c*) one with a Sapphic, and (*d*) one with a Hendecasyllabic rhythm. He consults a table of measures, and writes

(*a*) The ⁝ first is | easy, | quite an | even | run ∧ ‖.

The Alcaic, he finds, is identical with (*a*), save that it has a triplet dactyl in the third place, and he writes

(*b*) The ⁝ rhythm of | this is | *livelier;* | what a | gain! ∧ ‖.

The Sapphic, he notices, differs from (*a*) in three points: there is no upbeat, the last foot is completed, and there is a triplet dactyl in the same place as in the Alcaic. He writes

(*c*) *Triplet* | stands, be*ginning and* | end are | *alter'd* ‖.

The Hendecasyllabic, he finds, is the same as the Sapphic, except that the triplet is in the second foot; he writes

(*d*) Quite a | *different* | rhythm at | once e|merges ‖.

Now, although the scansion may seem to have dictated the rhythms of these lines, it has not really done so; all the student has gained from the scansion tables is a knowledge of what the required *measures* were. He was not asked for any particular rhythm in each case, but only for "a line with *an* Alcaic rhythm," etc.; and though he has correctly exemplified the

measures in each case, he has been indifferent to the rhythm of his lines, and did not think about it. Each line has indeed of necessity a certain rhythm, but it is only one of many that are possible. Thus for the Alcaic he might have written, not

(*b*) The : rhythm of | this is | livelier; | what a | gain! ∧ ‖

but (*x*) All : feet the | same but | one, which I | must resolve ∧ ‖.

And for the Sapphic he might have written, not

(*c*) Triplet | stands, beginning and | end are | alter'd ‖

but (*y*) Keep the | triplet, | alter the | start and | ending ‖.

The alteration in the position of the pause has made the rhythm or movement of (*x*) and (*y*) noticeably different from that of (*b*) and (*c*) respectively, and further rhythmic varieties of the measures might be introduced by the same means.

Now, the character of these Greek measures was fixed; the Alcaic for instance must be a 'checked' line with upbeat, and while it must have a resolution in the third place, that foot must be a triplet dactyl, not a tribrach. Their possible diversities of rhythm were therefore so far limited. Our heroic measure, on the other hand, is capable of practically unlimited rhythmical variety, for the following reasons:

(*a*) The upbeat may be disyllabic.

(*b*) There may or may not be an upbeat.

(*c*) The line may be 'checked' or 'full.'

(*d*) Any foot, even the last, may be resolved, and there may be several resolutions in the same line.

(*e*) The resolutions may take any of the three forms mentioned or that of a quadrisyllabic foot.

(*f*) A syllable may be lengthened to the value of 3 shorts, making a monosyllabic foot.

(*g*) A monosyllabic foot may be formed by a pause after the stressed syllable (– ∧).

(*h*) The monosyllabic foot may occur in any place.

(*i*) Irrational syllables may be used.

(*j*) The word-ending may coincide with the foot-divisions, as in | *merry* | *meetings* (trochaic rhythm).

(*k*) Or it may not, as in *To* | *cast be*|*yond our selves* (iambic rhythm).

(*l*) By pauses in the sense, or instinctive voice-pauses necessary to make the sense clear, the line may be broken into two or more parts, as 1 . 4, 4 . 1, 2 . 3, 3 . 2, $1\frac{1}{2}$. $3\frac{1}{2}$, etc.

(*m*) The sense may run on to the next line without any break (*enjambement*).

(*n*) Since not every foot need be stressed, the number of stresses may vary, and also the position of the unstressed feet.

(*o*) The pace of the line or a part of it may be retarded by various means, or it may be quickened.

Shakespeare's pre-eminence as a master of rhythm is unquestioned. The unerring instinct and skill with which he has employed the means at his disposal for giving variety to the movement of his verse become more amazing at every step one takes in analysis of it. Let us watch him at his work on the heroic line, occasionally noting at the same time how he has been followed by other poets.

Take the normal scheme of the full measure without resolutions :

$$\cup : - \cup \mid - \cup \mid - \cup \mid - \cup \mid - \cup \parallel .$$

How dull and inartistic is a line which does no more than just conform to this model, as Otway's

I've : treated | Belvi|dera | like your | daughter ‖ ;

and how wearisome would be even a small number of such lines if, without being consecutive, they occurred at sufficiently short intervals to impress their monotonous movement on the ear. Nor is the following much better, regarded from a rhythmical

point of view, though it is far superior as a line by reason of its tone-colour:

I : come to | bury | Caesar, | not to | praise him ‖.

It is saved by the pause; but only just saved, for it still retains one defect of the other: the three most important words—*bury*, *Caesar*, *praise him*, for the last must count as one word—coincide with the foot-divisions; and this coincidence is emphasised by the fact that each foot is stressed.

The comparative weakness of the ending – ⏑ led the poets at an early stage to cut off the last syllable and make the 'checked' line their staple measure. This at once altered the character of the line as a whole in a remarkable way, giving it that predominantly iambic rhythm which has so long been mistaken for its scansion; the normal rhythm became that of

To : sleép,—perchánce—to dreám;—ay thére's—the rúb ∧ ‖.

Here every foot has been cut in half, with a great gain of strength; and the cutting of the last foot in particular brings the line to a far more decided and effective close. How unmistakable is the change of rhythm which follows from this bisection of the feet, may be seen by rewriting the line from *Julius Caesar* as

I come to *slay* the traitor, not to praise him.

In saying the original we were compelled to emphasise the trochaic rhythm by the strong stress required for *bury*; now the even stronger one demanded by *slay* has given to two-fifths of the line (*I come to slay*) an iambic movement.

The rhythm of the plain checked line, however, is only less dull than that of the full measure; the ear demands variation of this, and the more we get in a series of verses, the greater is our satisfaction. I do not mean that there are not numberless fine lines running on without a marked pause, written on the plain model. The normal scheme is capable of the utmost dignity and beauty; but to achieve this the poet must rely solely

upon his style—the turns of his speech, the force, nobility, or grace of his language; on the tone-colour, that is the beauty or aptness of the mere sounds of the syllables; upon alliteration and any other similar resource. Yet a dozen such lines in succession, even from Shakespeare, would make us wish for the diversified rhythm of prose, and accordingly one of the first aims of a poet is to avoid this unpleasing monotony.

We will now examine in detail the methods by which Shakespeare effects diversity of rhythm while still retaining the scheme of the plain norm, that is while writing lines, full or checked, with upbeat and without resolutions or monosyllabic feet.

1. (*a*) *A Pause in the Sense.*

Let us begin with a line already quoted:

To sleep, perchance to dream; ay there's the rub.

What is it saves this, with its plain unvaried scansion, from being rhythmically as tame as

I've treated Belvidera like your daughter,

or the following oversight from Marlowe, if it is his,

Which I'll maintain as long as life doth last?

It is redeemed by the pauses—the one made at *sleep*, the rather longer one at *dream*, and the slight one at the 'irrational' *ay*, which prevents the line having an undignified finish. Yet, notwithstanding the pauses, the rhythm of the line as a whole is not lost; for the ear knows what to expect, and is content to wait for it, just as when in music a chord is held through two or three bars. Similarly the following is saved by the pause:

I am not mad: I would to God I were!

With admirable effect the line is broken into a dipody and a tripody. Again, take this one,

To-|morrow! | O, that's | sudden! | Spare him, | spare him!

It is of full measure, and rhythmically as well as scansionally

trochaic, with no breaking of the feet, but it is more than saved by the pauses. The following are a few further examples:

Outrun the pauser reason. Here lay Duncan.
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman.
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold.
Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
Thy gory locks at me.
Though I am mad, I will not bite him: call...
Like ¦ hér! O Isis! 'tis impossible. S.*

Where ¦ joy for | ever | dwells! Hâil, | horrors! | hail,
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor—one who brings... M.

And I, the last, go forth companionless. T.
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow. T.

Prîde ¦ breaks itsélf, and | toô mûch | gained is | góne. Sw.
They have their will; much talking mends it not. Sw.
What ¦ do ye singing? what is this ye sing? Sw.

(*b*) The same relief is effected by the pause, however slight, which is made by the voice, partly for emphasis and partly to make the meaning clear, even when there is no pause in the sense:

Against the undivulged pretence)(I fight)(
Of treasonous malice. S.

run on

The dashing rocks)(thy sea-sick weary bark. S.
Have no delight)(to pass away the time. S.
Till George be pack'd)(with post-horse)(up to heaven. S.

* In the following pages S. appended to a quotation means Shakespeare; M., Milton; T., Tennyson; Sw., Swinburne. References to Shakespeare, when given, follow the numbering of the Globe edition.

Dove-like)(satst brooding on the vast abyss. M.
As far removed from God)(and light of Heaven. M.
In horrible destruction)(laid thus low. M.

With rosy slender fingers)(backward drew
From her ⁝ warm | brows and | bosom)(her | deep | hair. T.
The king who fights his people)(fights himself. T.
Around a kíng)(returning from his wars. T.

What storm is this)(that tightens all our sail? Sw.
But loves not laws thrown down)(and lives awry. Sw.
But what he will)(remoulds and discreates. Sw.

2. (*a*) Conspicuous words (italicised in the examples, which are all from Shakespeare) are apt to change the rhythm in a striking manner. The double vertical lines mark a change of rhythm.

From thence the sauce to meat || is ⁝ *cére|mony*.
But I have none : || the ⁝ *king-becoming* | graces ||.
The *multiplying* || *villanies* || of nature.
He hearkens after || *prophecies* || and dreams.
Will I set up || my *everlasting* | rest, ∧ ||
And shake the yoke || of *inauspicious* | stars ∧ ||.
Thou elvish-mark'd, || *abortive*, | *rooting* | hog.

(*b*) Hardly less striking is the effect of the choice and arrangement of ordinary words (italicised in the examples, which are again taken from Shakespeare) :

And strew || *this hungry churchyard* || with thy limbs.
Unless to spy || *my shadow* || in the sun.
This vault || *a feasting presence* || full of light.
And now no soil || *nor cautel* || doth besmirch.
For loan || oft loses || *both* || itself and friend.
As full || *of sórrows* || *as* || the séa of sánds.
And with a *corded ladder* || fetch her down.
Presuming on || *an ague's* || privilege.

3. The movement of the line is sensibly altered by a reduction of the number of stresses and the position and relative strength of those that are retained:

Our brúised mărches to delíghtful mĕasures. S.
And déscant on mine ówn deförmity. S.
And híde me with a dĕad man in his shroúd. S.
As is the níght befóre some fĕstival. S.
She lóved me for the dăngers I had páss'd. S.
If we will keep in fávour with the kíng. S.
I do remémber an apóthecary. S.

What reinfórcement we may gaín from hŏpe,
If not what resolútion from despaír. M.

And toók it, and have wórn it, like a kíng. T.
But spake with such a sádness and so lów. T.
It made the laúghter of an áfternoón. T.

I bid thee, child, fare deáthward and farewéll. Sw.
This lást was wíth them, and they knéw not it. Sw.

4. The movement is retarded to a slight or considerable extent by (*a*) the use of irrational longs, (*b*) the multiplication of consonants, (*c*) pauses, as already noticed, (*d*) monosyllabic feet, to be noticed more particularly below. These means may be employed severally or in combination:

All the charms

Of | Sycorax, toáds, | beetles, | bats, líght | on you! S.
Rúmble thy | bélly ful! spít, | fire! spoút, | rain! S.
Whose | foot spúrns back the ocean's roaring tides. S.
Now | thy proud | neck beárs | half my | burthen'd | yoke. S.
Even | at the base of Pompey's statuĕ,
Which | all the | while ran | blood, greát | Caesar | fell. S.
Sŏ | stretch'd oût | huge in | length the | Arch-fiénd | lay. M.
First Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood. M.
Fixed | fate, freĕ | will, fŏre knowledge | absolute. M.

A : deathwhite | mist slept | over | land and | sea. T.
Oaths, : insult, | filth, and | monstrous | blasphemies. T.
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock. T.

De:throned, dis|praised, dis|seated; | and my | mind. Sw.
And : plashed car-deep with | plunging | feet; but | she. Sw.
His : tense flank | trembling round the barbed wound. Sw.

We have hitherto considered only lines moulded on the plain norm, having neither resolved nor monosyllabic feet, and retaining the upbeat. It is only when the norm is diversified in these respects that we perceive of what endless varieties the line is capable in the hands of a master. We will now examine the results of these modifications.

5. *Lyric Measures in Blank Verse.* For the purposes of this section I must ask the reader to make a brief excursion into Greek prosody. Besides the plain lyric measures of two or more unresolved feet, the Greeks used the following among many others.

Dipody: (α) $\sim\cup$ | $-\cup\,\|\|$, always without upbeat.
Tripodies: (β) $\sim\cup$ | $-\cup$ | $-\cup\,\|\|$ (1st foot resolved).
(γ) $-\cup$ | $\sim\cup$ | $-\cup\,\|\|$ (2nd foot resolved).
Tetrapodies: (δ) $\sim\cup$ | $-\cup$ | $-\cup$ | $-\cup\,\|\|$ (1st foot resolved).
(ϵ) $-\cup$ | $\sim\cup$ | $-\cup$ | $-\cup\,\|\|$ (2nd foot resolved)*.

All these were used full or checked, and singly or in combination. The tripodies and tetrapodies sometimes took upbeat, and were occasionally varied by an additional resolution and the introduction of monosyllabic feet.

Now, it is not a little remarkable that Shakespeare's blank verse, especially after it has attained its fullest perfection, frequently falls into one or other of these measures. I do not mean that he borrowed them from a Greek or Latin source,

* (α) *Versus Adonius*, but not so called when checked; (β) *First Pherecratean*; (γ) *Second Pherecratean*; (δ) *First Glyconic*; (ϵ) *Second Glyconic*.

which would be a possible but needless supposition; I would merely point out that his ear undoubtedly recognised and distinguished them, and that he employed them intentionally. His types differ from the Greek only in that he sometimes gives the *Adonius* (*a*) an upbeat, and sometimes has a tribrach (⏑ ⏑ ⏑) or quadrisyllabic instead of the triplet dactyl. If we have ever wondered what it is that makes his dramatic verse so musical, we find here a further secret than that of its ever varied tone-colour; its movement is continually diversified and enlivened by unmistakable lyric rhythms, which are yet so tempered with the plain sequences that the dignity of the verse is unimpaired. We have in the result that exquisitely varied music which for generations editors and prosodists have done their best to stifle.

In the following illustrations the measures which reproduce the Greek ones are referred to by the Greek letters by which they are distinguished above, and the arabic numerals denote plain measures according to the number of their feet. Thus

To ⁝ be, or | not to | be, ∧ ‖ that is the | question. (3. *a*)

means that the line is composed of three unresolved feet of plain measure, ⏑ ⁝ – ⏑ | – ⏑ | – ∧ ‖, followed by the Greek measure designated above by the letter (*a*). The *rhythm* of the first six words, as distinct from their scansion, is iambic, but this disappears after the monosyllabic foot, and we have the rhythm ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ | ⏑ ⏑ ‖. We may note here the happy effect of the resolved foot; if we had had | *that's the* | *question*, the demonstrative would have received too much emphasis, and the latter part of the line would have been trivial and somewhat dead. It is in order to avoid this want of liveliness which might otherwise result, that the monosyllabic foot is usually followed by a resolution. We may now proceed with our illustrations. (The sign ‖ marks the point at which a fresh measure begins, and is independent of the single lines that mark the scansion.)

And his : gash'd | stabs ∧ || look'd like a | breach in | nature ||. (2. β)
As : mad as the | vex'd | sea, ∧ || singing a loud ∧ ||. (β. α)
What a : haste | looks through his | eyes! ∧ || So should he | look ∧ ||. (γ. α)
That my : keen | knife || see not the | wound it | makes ∧ ||. (2. β)
In : this | time of the | night! ∧ || Bring him away ∧ ||. (γ. α)
Ring the a|larum-bell ∧ ||. Murder and | treason! ||. (β. α)
What is a|miss? ∧ || You are, and | do not | know it ||. (α. β)
How will he | scorn! ∧ || how will he | spend his | wit! ∧ ||. (α. β)
Ay, Greek, | that is my | name ∧ ||. (γ)
She is a|lone the A rabian | bird, || and : I ∧ ||... (δ varied. 1)
I am : ∧ || what must we | under|stand by | this? ∧ ||. (1. δ)
All's : well, sir : || take my | power in the | court for | yours ∧ ||. (1. ε)
Mark it : || the : eldest | of them at | three years | old ∧ ||. (1. ε)
The : solemn | temples, the | great | globe it|self ∧ ||.

In the last line we have (ε) extended with fine effect to a pentapody. The combination (α. β) or (β. α) is especially common.

Besides these Shakespeare often uses in his blank verse lyric measures ending in a resolved foot. These may be dipodies, tripodies, or tetrapodies, designated respectively by the letters ζ, η, θ. The following are examples :

Look, : here is | writ 'Kind | Julia' : || unkind | Julia! ||. (η. ζ)
'To : thee, sweet | Julia' : || that I'll | tear a way. (ζ. 3)
There's : many | have com mitted it. || —Ay, well | said. (η. 2)
Say by this | token, || I de sire his | company ||. (α. η)
My lord, || I | came to | see your | father's | funeral ||. (1. θ)

6. *Alternation of Iambic and Trochaic Rhythm.* With rare exceptions, in no heroic line but an inferior one do the words fall on the ear with an unbroken iambic or an unbroken trochaic rhythm all through, as they do in the following dreadful specimens :

> And then she fell across the bed and swoon'd.
> The lightly springing tiger swiftly near'd him.

In a rhythmically good line the feet are broken up, either by a pause or pauses, or because the words fall into groups some of which have an iambic, others a trochaic rhythm. Thus the line,

And shake the yoke ‖ of *inauspicious* stars,

has an iambic rhythm as far as "yoke," but then the trochaic sequences of the long and important word "inauspicious" impose themselves on the ear, at once lifting the verse far above the commonplace. Even a disyllable is sufficient to alter the rhythm and redeem a line from monotony, as in the following:

'Twas pitiful, 'twas *wondrous* pitiful.

The following beautifully modelled passage illustrates the charming effect of the change on a larger scale:

The lunatic, ‖ the lover, and the poet
Are ; of imagination ‖ all compact ‖.
One sees more devils ‖ than | vast | hell can hold;
That is the madman: the lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, ‖ in a | fine | frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to aery nothing
A local habitation and a name.

The rhythms here are: *The lunatic*, iambic, but the rest of the line is trochaic. The 2nd line begins trochaic and ends with the rhythm of the 'cretic' $\acute{} \breve{} \acute{}$ in *all compact*. The 3rd, by reason of the slight voice-pause at *devils*, begins trochaic, but it ends iambic. The 4th is altogether trochaic, but is saved by the resolutions and the pauses. So the 5th mainly; but there is a slight voice-pause at *beauty*, and since there is no stress on *in*, *in a brow* gives the rhythm $\breve{} \breve{} \acute{}$,—a delicate touch which, to my ear at least, makes the movement of the line as a whole peculiarly pleasing. In the 6th we have an iambic rhythm in

The poet's eye, and then a trochaic sequence (to which *in a* becomes a double upbeat), instinctively steadied by the monosyllabic foot *fine*. The 7th is mainly iambic, but ends trochaic; for I take it that while the first *heaven* is nearly monosyllabic, the *v* and *n* of the second are to be said much more distinctly, *heav-n*. The 8th is dominated by the trochees of *imagination bodies*, but melts into the 9th, which is iambic, admirably relieved by the irrational *un-* in *unknown*. The 10th is a beautifully diversified line; metrically it begins with a triplet dactyl but, as recited, with a trochee followed by an iambus. The *and*, though scansionally belonging to the foot *shapes and*, attaches itself to *gives* as though it were the upbeat of a fresh line, so that we go on with an iambus *and gives*, but only to find that the rhythm has imperceptibly melted into a trochaic movement in the two final feet. The last line is markedly trochaic in *local habitation*, but ends with the cretic *and a name*.

7. *The Monosyllabic Foot*. We have seen in § 5 how this foot at once alters the rhythm, and further examples are unnecessary here. As in the following cases, the foot frequently takes no more than the ordinary stress; and of course there will usually be no special stress when it is completed by a voice-pause:

My : body shall | make | good || upon this | earth ∧ ||. (β. 2)
The ap:pellant in | all | duty || greets your | highness ||. (β. 2)
On : pain to be | found || false and | recreant ∧ ||. (α. 3)
That : makes the | world || full of ill-favour'd | children ||. (2. β)

Further examples will be found in Appendix I, D.

The monosyllabic foot is so common that it should be looked for in any line where the straightforward scansion would give a false emphasis. It should, however, be remembered that *into*, *unto*, *without* (which occurs in modern poets and is sometimes heard still) were accepted pronunciations, and that a number of less common words than these, as *exile*, *aspect*, *portent*, *character*,

and several others, occasionally have in Shakespeare a stress different from that which we now give them.

8. The rhythm is lightened or enlivened by the use of open vowels and the absence of heavy syllables, and especially by resolutions. This effect is sometimes heightened by the occurrence of fewer stresses, and by the line's beginning with a resolved foot without upbeat. This last it is convenient to call 'initial resolution,' although a double upbeat is strictly an initial resolution. In the following examples resolutions are printed in italics:

Swéet are the | úses | of ad vérsi ty. S.
And ⁝ are up on the | *Méditer ránean* | flóte. S.
The ⁝ rank of | *ósiers* | by the | *murmuring* | stréam. S.
Ó, my ob livion | is a ⁝ very | *Ántony* ‖. S.
Hóver a bout me | with your | *aery* | wings. S.
Ádded to | their fa mili ári ty. S.
I do remémber an apóthecary. S.

In ⁝ *amorous* | dítties | all a | súmmer's | dáy. M.
Fled ⁝ over | *Adria* | *to the Hesperian* | fields. M.
Beyond the *Indian* mount; or *faery* elves. M.

As *lovelier* than whatever *Oread* haunt
The knolls of Ida. T.
I ⁝ *dálian* | Aphro díte | beaúti ful. T.
O ⁝ *Gálahad*, | and O | *Gálahad*, | fóllow | me. T.

Ae ⁝ *tolia* | thundered | with Thes *salian* | hoofs. Sw.
O *flower of Tegea*, maiden, fleetest foot. Sw.
Ar ⁝ *cadian* Ata lánta, | snówy-souled. Sw.

9. *Linking of the Lines.* In its earlier days blank verse was written in such a manner that the end of a clause or sentence usually coincided with the end of a line; considerable stops in the line were rare, and it was exceptional for the sense to run on from verse to verse without at least such a break as is made by a comma. The objection to this method of com-

position is that the ear is apt to become wearied as it listens to a series of sentences almost all of which are of exactly the same length. The defect characterises Shakespeare's earlier work and all Marlowe's. After his earliest period of production, however, Shakespeare made it his constant aim so to manipulate the verse—by frequent full stops or colons within the line, by carrying on the sense from line to line without even a comma (*enjambement*), and by the introduction of short lines and Alexandrines—that it should not, as uttered, present this monotonous sequence of distinguishable 5-foot lengths. He elaborated a Rhythmical Period so composed that the words fall upon the ear in a succession of measures of continually varied length, like those of a lyric poem, and among these a recognisable 5-foot measure is perhaps the least frequent. As one listens, it is only occasionally possible to tell where the written line begins and ends. In this development we get dramatic blank verse in its most perfect form; it is the final achievement of artistic rhythm, for the poet has travelled as far as it is possible to go from the merely elementary and mechanical movement furnished by the normal metrical scheme. The first example here given shows into what music he can modulate even the plain talk of a council-chamber:

Duke. There : is no | compo|sition | in these | news
That | gives them | credit ||.
First Sen. In:deed they are | dispro|portion'd ; ||
My : letters say || a : hundred and | seven | galleys ||.
Duke. And : mine, a | hundred and | forty ||.
Sec. Sen. And : mine, two | hundred : ||
But : though they | jump not | on a | just ac|count,—^ ||
As in these | cases, || where the | aim re|ports, ^ ||
'Tis : oft with | difference— || yet do they | all con|firm
A | Turkish | fleet, || and : bearing | up to | Cyprus ||.
Oth. 1. 3. 1.

In effect the measures of this period are: 7. β. 2. β. γ. 2. 5. α. 3. ζ. 5. 3. It will be noticed that a measure often borrows a syllable from the last foot of the preceding one to serve as an upbeat.

Come, ⁝ leave your | tears: ‖ a ⁝ brief fare|well: ‖ the ⁝ beast
With | many | heads ∧ ‖ butts me a way ∧ ‖. Nay, mother, |
Where is your | ancient | courage? ‖. *Cor.* 4. 1. 1.

In these two and a half lines we have five separate measures: 2. 2. 3. α. δ (varied by an additional resolution in the second place). We may note the skill with which the resolved final foot *Nay, mother* is used as the initial resolution of the new measure.

To ⁝ cry to the | sea that | roar'd to | us, ‖ to ⁝ sigh
To the | winds ‖ whose ⁝ pity, sighing back again, ∧ ‖
Did us but | loving | wrong ∧ ‖. *Temp.* 1. 2. 149.
Period: δ. α. 4. β.

There are countless similar examples in the later plays.

Although the blank-verse line only has been dealt with in this chapter, the principles set forth are of course applicable to measures of other lengths.

CHAPTER III

BLANK VERSE

ACCORDING to a long-standing tradition, originally founded, as I believe, on a confusion of metre with rhythm, the norm of the English heroic line is supposed to consist of a succession of five feet each of which is an iambus (⏑ ⏓), and therefore has its stress on the second syllable. Thus the normal scheme given is,

⏑ ⏓ | ⏑ ⏓ | ⏑ ⏓ | ⏑ ⏓ | ⏑ ⏓ ‖.

This scheme probably obtained acceptance because the Greek 'Iambic' line used to be so scanned, but for some 50 years now that scansion has been abandoned. It was found that Greek prosody as a whole must remain as incoherent and unintelligible as it had been from post-classical times, unless the foot in all measures began with the stressed or chiefly stressed syllable. Accordingly, when the line is divided into feet, the Iambic is now marked off thus:

⏑ ⁝ ⏓ ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ | ⏓ ^ ‖.

The six feet are counted from the first stress, and the last foot is not completed. The initial syllable, of which more will be said below, is only introductory to the measure. As a metrical foot, therefore, ⏑ ⏓ no longer receives any support from Greek prosody. Moreover, when applied to our verse, the iambic scheme breaks down at every turn. It is true that many lines can be made to conform to it,—all lines, for instance, like

To sléep! | perchánce | to dréam: | ay thére's | the rúb ‖;

but from Chaucer onwards we find a large number of lines, considerably more than half the heroic verse written, that are

incapable of being fitted to a measure composed of such feet. The following are a few of these, scanned after the received manner :

(*a*) Háve I | nót in | a pítch'd | báttle | heárd. *T. S.* 1. 2. 206.

(*b*) ∧ Knéel | thou dówn | Phílip, | but ríse | more greát. *K. J.* 1. 1. 161.

(*c*) What a háste | loóks through | his eyes! | Só should | he loók. *Mac.* 1. 2. 46.

(*d*) Ánd his | gash'd stábs | loók'd like | a bréach | in ná‖ture. *Mac.* 2. 3. 119.

(*e*) Let him gó, | Gértrude; | dó not | féar our | pérson ‖. *Ham.* 4. 5. 122.

(*f*) O mónstrous áct! | —Víllan y, víll|any, víll‖any! *Oth.* 5. 2. 190.

(*g*) Tweáks me | by the nóse? | gives me | the líe | in the throat ‖. *Ham.* 2. 2. 601.

It will be seen that the defenders of the scheme have really abandoned it. Finding that they cannot make every foot an iambus or its equivalent, they introduce a trochee wherever it seems to be wanted, although its stress is exactly the opposite of the foot they started with. The immediate result is that the stresses do not recur at regular intervals, although the regular recurrence of the stress is the essential condition which differentiates verse from prose. Thus the scheme for (*a*) has become ⏑ ∸ | ⏑ ∸ | ⏑ ∸ | ⏑ ∸ | ⏑ ∧ ‖; and that for (*c*)

⏑ ⏑ ∸ | ⏑ ∸ | ⏑ ∸ | ⏑ ∸ | ⏑ ∸ ‖.

And so on with the other lines; continuity of rhythm has disappeared, and we have the irregular beats of prose. In (*b*) the poet is charged with omitting the first part of the first foot, in (*d*) with adding a 'hypermetrical syllable,' and in (*f*) with adding two! In (*d*) "And" is falsely stressed, and "gash'd,"

which demands stress, gets none. In (*e*) every foot but the first has become a trochee. The first foot of this line, "Let him go" (⏑ ⏑ ⏓), is called by the prosodists an anapaest; but as we saw in ch. 1, the anapaest is a 4-time measure stressed ⏑ ⏑ ⏓. The sequence ⏑ ⏑ ⏓ is in fact no foot at all. Plainly this system, which proceeds at one moment on an iambic and at the next on a trochaic base, is false in principle and practically valueless. Let us see whether the trochaic base will not serve us better.

When music was first marked off in bars (in the 16th century), the principle instinctively adopted was to begin each bar with a stressed note; and this would seem to be the natural mode of division, although many musical themes begin with a note that is not accented. Considering the close analogy between music and verse, to mark off the units of a verse measure otherwise would therefore seem as *un*-natural as it would be to divide the notes of a waltz into bars each of which began with the third beat. Now, there occurs in Greek verse a pentapody whose measure is indistinguishable from that of our heroic line. Its norm is

⏑ ⁝ ⏓ ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ | ⏓ ⏑ ‖.

The introductory syllable, marked off by the sign ⁝, although an invariable adjunct of some Greek measures, is in many (including this one) inserted or omitted at pleasure in successive lines; just as in music a recurrent theme sometimes appears with an introductory note and sometimes without. It is called from the analogy of the musical conductor's baton, the *anacrusis* or *upbeat*. In Greek triple measures this upbeat is normally a short syllable, but it is sometimes an 'irrational' long (that is, a long syllable standing where the scheme strictly demands a short), and sometimes resolved into two half-shorts. Correspondingly in English it is sometimes a heavy syllable, occasionally (in Shakespeare) even taking stress, and sometimes disyllabic.

The opening lines of Macaulay's *Horatius* afford an excellent illustration:

Lárs ⁝ Porsen'a of | Clusium, ‖
By the níne | gods he | swore ∧ ‖
That the ⁝ great | house of | Tarquin ‖
Should ⁝ suffer | wrong nó | more ∧ ‖.
By the ⁝ nine | gods he | swore it, ‖
And ⁝ named a | trysting | day, ∧ ‖
And ⁝ bade his | messen'gers ride | forth ∧ ‖
East and | west and | south and | north, ∧ ‖
To ⁝ summon | his ar'ray ∧ ‖.

The 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 7th lines show the irrational, and the 3rd and 5th the disyllabic upbeat. The 2nd and 8th lines have no upbeat. Many of our Nursery Rimes are equally instructive:

Pólly, | pút the | kéttle | ón, ∧ ‖
And we'll ⁝ áll | háve | téa ∧ ‖.

The following variations or natural developments of the scheme are normal both in the Greek line and our own:

(1) The long of the trochee is protracted to the time of a whole foot, as in vv. 3 and 5 of *Horatius*.

(2) The trochee is resolved into

(*a*) the *Tribrach* (♩♪♪) as *pitiful*.

(*b*) the *Triplet Dactyl* (♩3♪♪), the syllables of which have the values 1½, ½, 1, as *furious*.

(*c*) the unnamed foot ♩ 𝅘𝅥𝅯𝅘𝅥𝅯, a long and two half-shorts, as in *Dédd, for a | dúcat!*

(*d*) a Quadrisyllabic foot, as in *Márry, to con fèss*, and occasionally even into a Quinquesyllabic.

The triplet dactyl is to be distinguished from the true 4-time dactyl ♩♪ (♩♪♪), which has two stresses, a stronger and a weaker.

The Greeks used indifferently and in successive lines (*a*) the full measure, which is used throughout in Dante's *Divina Commedia*,

Nel : mezzo | del cam|min di | nostra | vita, ||

and in lines like

I : come to | bury | Caesar, | not to | praise him, ||

and (*b*) the 'checked' line with the last foot incomplete, as

But : let them | measure | us by | what they | will, ∧ ||
We'll : measure | them a | measure | and be | gone ∧ ||.

Our poets do the same, but for good reasons use chiefly the checked line, employing the full measure only as a variation. The latter is practically a necessity for a poem of any length in Italian, but is less suitable for English. On the other hand, the checked line, while usually effecting a closer junction with the next, gives the verse greater strength.

As Chaucer had done before him, Shakespeare at once developed in his handling of the measure every variation with which the Greek line had been embellished. For instance, we find in so early a play as *Love's Labour's Lost*,

How will he | scorn! ∧ | *how will he* | spend his | wit! ∧ ||
Well : *fitted in* | arts, ∧ | glori|ous in | arms ∧ ||.
I be:*seech you, a* | word: ∧ | what is | *she in the* | white? ∧ ||.

His ear for music recognised, as Chaucer's had done, the rhythmical beauty of the resolved foot, and so far was he from seeking to avoid it, that the plays show about 900 quadrisyllabic and about 17 quinquesyllabic feet, while he frequently gives us a trisyllable even in the final foot. One feature he added which is not found in Greek poetry—a pause within the line of the time of a short syllable, as in the three lines just quoted. This is to be distinguished from the actual lengthening of the stressed syllable to the time of a whole foot, and is similar to the normal omission of the measure's final syllable.

The scheme of the blank-verse line therefore is

1. $\breve{} \vdots \acute{} \breve{} \mid \acute{} \breve{} \mid \acute{} \breve{} \mid \acute{} \breve{} \mid \acute{} \breve{} \parallel$ (full).

2. $\breve{} \vdots \acute{} \breve{} \mid \acute{} \breve{} \mid \acute{} \breve{} \mid \acute{} \breve{} \mid \acute{} \wedge \parallel$ (checked).

3. The upbeat may be omitted, leaving the first foot a trochee.

4. The upbeat may be omitted and the line begin with a resolved foot, — *the usual form when there is no upbeat* :

$$\begin{matrix} \breve{}\,\breve{}\,\breve{} \\ \sim\,\breve{} \end{matrix} \Big| - \breve{} \Big| - \breve{} \Big| \text{ etc.}$$

5. Any foot may be trisyllabic.

6. Any foot but the last may be quadrisyllabic.

7. Any foot may be monosyllabic, being formed either by prolongation of the stressed syllable, or by a pause after it in place of the unstressed one.

Before proceeding to illustrate the structure of the measure in detail by examples, it may be well to deal with certain possible misconceptions concerning metrical analysis in general. It may be laid down as indisputable that the rhythm of verse corresponds to that of music ; conceivably at least all verse could be set to music without change of its rhythms. But in music that is properly interpreted it continually happens that of half-a-dozen consecutive bars no two take up exactly the same amount of time, while the notational values of the individual notes will be habitually departed from at least to some small extent. So it is in the utterance of verse (and we must remember that all verse is meant to be spoken aloud), but with much greater latitude; for the line, and the dramatic line especially, is extremely elastic: one foot will take the normal length of time, one or two or more will be said more slowly, others faster. Again, we use—our language compels us to use—a large number of 'irrationals,' and individual words with a significance that

needs to be brought into relief occur far more often than is the case with individual notes of music. Owing to these two facts combined, the spoken trochee will often become a true spondee 𝅗𝅥 𝅗𝅥, with a considerable stress on the second syllable; and the resolved foot will undergo even greater modification, though it will never fail to be recognisable as being approximately of one of the four types mentioned on p. 35. Nevertheless, however great the modification, the rhythm is always preserved, because we find no difficulty in distributing the normal stresses. There are of course limits to the use of heavy irrationals, but within these limits we may say that the measure is made for the poet, not the poet for the measure. Although, therefore, in order to facilitate explanation, we may legitimately apply the quantitative or musical notation to verse, we do not imply that the movement of verse is in all respects similar to that of music. The remark may seem needless, but it is important; for many people deny that English poetry can be usefully marked off in this manner simply from a failure to recognise the compatibility of two facts which are only superficially at variance,—that on the one hand the movement of verse is essentially *orderly*, is in fact a *rhythm*, and on the other that the time-values of the quantitative notation are not slavishly and inartistically observed when the words are spoken aloud.

These remarks may be briefly illustrated. In saying the line,

To sleep, perchance to dream; ay there's the rub:

we retain almost exactly the musical values of the syllables, but at the same time we depart from the more even flow of music by making pauses both at *sleep* and *dream*, and a very short one after *ay*. But the spoken trochee often becomes a *pyrrhic* (𝅗𝅥 𝅘𝅥𝅯, ♫), as in

Elaine the fair, Elaine the | *lova*|ble,
Elaine the | *lily* | maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber | *up a* | tower to the | east,

where the quadrisyllabic in the last line may be noted in passing. This change to the pyrrhic, however, and the fact that the foot sometimes becomes an apparent spondee, should not lead us to call the rhythm of English poetry 'duple'—that is, to regard the normal unit as ⏑ – rather than ⏑ ⏑, as has been suggested; the prevailing character of our verse as a whole, forbids such a view. The phenomenon often occurs in music, as when we get, in a composition written in triple time, two quavers replacing three (written , to mark the equivalence). The difficulty felt would probably disappear with recognition of the irrational long. This syllable is sometimes so heavy that, as has been said above, the foot as spoken becomes a true spondee, as when Macbeth says,

> No, this hand of mine will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the | *grēen ōne* | réd.

In speaking these words we not only give to *one* a considerable secondary stress, but we also make a slight pause after *green*. Similarly the last syllable of a trisyllabic foot is not infrequently made somewhat heavy by a slight stress, as in the third foot of the line,

> Is a ⁞ sharp | wit ∧ | mátch'd with *tōō* | blunt a | will.

Again, in saying a quadrisyllabic foot we do not attempt to cram the syllables into the time of two or three, as an ill-trained choir rushes through the words assigned to the reciting note of a chant; there is often, especially in Shakespeare, a pause after the second or third syllable:

Mother, I am | going | to the | market-place. *Cor.* 3. 2. 131.

Wert ⁞ thou as | young as | I, ∧ | *Juliet thy* | love.
R. and J. 3. 3. 65.

Chief ⁞ *nourisher in* | life's ∧ | feast, —. *Mac.* 2. 2. 40.

In the last two lines there is a slight voice-pause after *Juliet* and *nourisher*, as after *Mother* in the first. Lastly, it is common for the first syllable of a foot to take no stress at all, save the very light foot-stress that marks the rhythm, as in

I ; do re mémber | an a póthe cary,

a line which has only two real stresses. It need hardly be said that to this again every page of music affords parallels.

CHAPTER IV

BLANK VERSE (*continued*)

The Trochaic Scheme Illustrated

We have seen in the previous chapter that the trochaic scheme is at any rate sound in principle. Unlike the iambic system, it provides the first and strictly indispensable requisite for any prosodic scheme—*continuity of rhythm*. It places the stress where it should be, unless we depart from Greek precedent and musical analogy, and where in fact it must be of necessity. It explains why the initial syllable of the line is sometimes stressed and sometimes not, and it accounts for the presence of three or even four syllables in a foot as a natural resolution of the normal unit on principles familiar to us in music. It also explains how two stressed syllables can occur together by recognition of the monosyllabic foot, and it relieves us of the necessity of bringing against the poets the ridiculous charge that they habitually violate their measure by 'smuggling in' a 'redundant syllable' or syllables at the end of the line. We have now to submit the scheme to the crucial test of application: does it work? For this purpose we will examine the handling of the line by four of its greatest masters, taking the features of the system one by one. It should be understood that, unless the contrary is stated, the examples given might be indefinitely multiplied; on the other hand, I have found no genuine line, heroic or lyric, which is refractory.

1. *The Upbeat.* Normally the line has an upbeat, and this is also the case with the bulk of our lyric poetry. The proportion of blank-verse lines without upbeat appears to be nearly as follows: Shakespeare 2 in 9; Milton, Keats (*Hyperion*), and

Tennyson, 2 in 10; Swinburne in *Atalanta in Calydon* 2 in 8. In all the poets they are distributed very irregularly, the omission seeming to occur whenever it is convenient—as one would expect. It may be made for the purpose of giving great or moderate emphasis to the first word of the line, but often there is no emphasis at all there:

(*a*) Omission for emphasis:

Brūtus will | stárt a | spírit as | soón as | Caĕsar ‖. S.
Shoŏk, but de|láyed to | stríke, though | óft in|vóked ∧ ‖. M.
Roăring, and | áll the | wáve was | in a | flăme ∧ ‖. T.
Swĭfter than | dreams the | white flŏwn | feet of | sleep ∧ ‖. Sw.

(*b*) No emphasis:

Have you got | leave to | go to | shrĭft to-|day ? ∧ ‖. S.
Under thy | cónduct, | and in | dreádful | deéds ∧ ‖. M.
Ridest thou | then so | hótly | on a | quést ? ∧ ‖. T.
Sent in thine | ánger a|gainst us for | sín | dóne ∧ ‖. Sw.

The prefixing of an upbeat to a verse, although to some extent a matter of indifference, is by no means altogether so. A short measure of 3 or 4 feet gains noticeably in liveliness and energy by the omission, as for instance in Milton's *L' Allegro*:

> Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
> Jest, and youthful Jollity,
> Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,
> Nods and Becks and wreathed Smiles*.

In this poem nearly half of the 4-foot lines have no upbeat. In *Il Penseroso* the proportion of omission to insertion is only 1 to 4, as we might expect. A 5-foot line, on the contrary, loses in liveliness if it has no upbeat, unless the first foot is resolved; and even a short succession of pentapodies beginning – ⏑ | – ⏑ |

* The effect may, however, be counteracted by subject matter and language, as in the hymn *Rock of Ages cleft for me.*

would be disagreeable if the rhythm had not an obvious purpose, as in Tennyson's *Vision of Sin*, II:

Thén me thoúght I | heárd a | méllow | soúnd,
Gáthering | up from | all the | lówer | groúnd;
Nárrowing | ín to | where they | sát assémbled
Lów voluptuous | músic | winding | trémbled,
Wóv'n in | círcles: | they that | heárd it | sígh'd,
Panted | hand in hand with faces pale,
Swung themselves, and in low tones replied;
Till the | fountain spouted, showering wide
Sleet of | diamond-drift and pearly hail;
Then the | music touch'd the gates and died;
Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,
Storm'd in | orbs of song, a growing gale;
Till | thronging | in and | in...*

Accordingly when the upbeat is wanting in our measure, the first foot is almost always resolved, as for instance in

Mán but a | rúsh against Othéllo's | breast,

and lines like the following, the first foot of which is a trochee or monosyllabic, are comparatively rare:

(*a*) *If I* | tálk to him, | with his | ínnocent | práte. S.
(*b*) *Uni*versal reproach, far | worse to | bear. M.
(*c*) *Now to* | glorious | burial | slowly | borne. T.
(*d*) *Tracks, and* | gains on him, | scenting | sins far | off. Sw.
(*e*) *Well*, ∧ | Suffolk, thou | shalt not | see me | blush. S.
(*f*) *Senseless* | *linen!* | happier there in than | I. S.
(*g*) *Tell the* | *clock there.* | Give me a | calendar. S.
(*h*) *One word* | *more, good* | *lady.* | —What shall I | do? S.
(*i*) *Yes, forsooth, I* | *wish you* | joy of the | worm. S.

It will be observed that in the first five examples the line

* Cp. the Wellington Ode, II and VIII.

is at once relieved by a triplet foot. There are 10 similar instances in Milton's *Samson*, and over 170 in Shakespeare*. Sometimes two trochees precede the resolution, as in (*f*) and (*g*), and of this type I count in Shakespeare some 80 instances†. More rarely he postpones the resolution to the 4th foot, as in (*h*) and (*i*), giving of this rhythm, I think, not more than 22 examples‡. In Swinburne 5-foot lines beginning – ⏑ are extremely rare.

Among the lines without upbeat there are two types which have a special interest from the fact that they happen to be identical with two well-known Greek measures, the *Phalaeceus hendecasyllabus* and the *Sapphic*. The former, commonly called the 'hendecasyllabic,' is a pentapody with one resolution only, in the 2nd foot, and with the last foot completed. Shakespeare gives 31 examples (see Appendix I, E, 4), as

Brother, | *give me thy* | hand; and, | gentle | Warwick ‖.
Villains, | *answer you* | so the | lord protector? ‖.
He that | *parts us shall* | bring a | brand from | heaven ‖.

In Milton I have noticed two, both in choruses of *Samson*:

Universally | crowned with | highest | praises ‖. 175
O, how | cómely it | is and | how reviving ‖ 1268
To the : spírits of | júst mén | lóng oppréssed, ∧ ‖ (i.e. *oppress'd*)
When : Gód into the | hánds of | their delíverer 1270
Púts invíncible | might.

One of our prosodists, referring to vv. 1268–70, speaks of Milton as "occasionally attempting quite new measures" in these choruses, and misquoting 1270, scans all three lines in the same way:

O, how | comely it | is and | how reviving ‖
Tó the | spirits of | just men | long oppressèd, ‖ 1269
Whén God | into the | hands of | their [oppressor] ‖.

* See Appendix I, E, 4, p. 103. † See Appendix I, E, 3, p. 103.
‡ See Appendix I, E, 2, p. 102.

It will be seen that the scansion gives an impossible emphasis to *To* in 1269, and to *When* in 1270, while it robs the word *God* of an indispensable stress; 1269 can be nothing but a 'checked' 4-foot line, and 1270 in its correct form is an Alexandrine. We have therefore only 175 and 1268 to consider. That Milton, who was a scholar, recognised the metre of these lines as being that of the hendecasyllabic, can hardly be doubted, but that he intentionally wrote them as such, seems to me highly improbable. As the examples from Shakespeare show,—for it cannot be supposed that *he* purposely imitated these measures,—we have merely a rhythm into which the heroic line is liable to fall when it has no upbeat and the last foot is completed. If Milton had been trying experiments in classical metres, we should certainly have had the Sapphic, which the choruses of *Samson* would easily have admitted, as we shall see in a moment from its appearance in Shakespeare. It is true that we find the Alcaic, a checked line with upbeat and a triplet in the 3rd place only,

$$\cup \vdots - \cup \mid - \cup \mid \sim \cup \mid - \cup \mid - \wedge \|,$$

but that is a form which the heroic line frequently takes in the poets generally. It occurs 11 times in *The Tempest*, Act i, sc. 2, and 5 times in *Samson*, yet once only in a chorus. I give two examples:

To : closeness | and the | *bettering* | of my | mind. S.

To : such a | tender | *ball as the* | eye confined. M.

The Alcaic, however, has an upbeat, and we were considering lines that have none. Of the Sapphic,

$$- \cup \mid - \cup \mid \sim \cup \mid - \cup \mid - \cup \|,$$

Shakespeare gives at least 19 instances (see Appendix I, E, 3, p. 103), but I have not noticed the measure in Milton:

Whát may | yoú be? | *Are you of* | goód or | évil? *O.* 5. 1. 65.

Whére my | són lies. | *When did you* | lose your | daúghter?
Temp. 5. 1. 152.

Sóme time | I shall | *sleép out, the* | rést I'll | whístle.
Lear, 2. 2. 163.

The occurrence of lines without upbeat, constituting as they do more than a sixth of all the heroic lines written, should of itself be sufficient to establish the trochaic base; but if further proof is needed, we find it in yet another variety of them which seems to settle the matter decisively. I mean such pure trochaic lines as

Néver, | néver, | néver, | néver, | néver! ‖. *Lear*, 5. 3. 308.
Néver, | néver! | Come, a wáy, a wáy! ∧ ‖. *J. C.* 3. 2. 258.
Hear you, master steward, where's our master? *Timon*, 4. 2. 1.
O this learning, what a thing it is!
O this woodcock, what an ass it is! *T. S.* 1. 2. 160 f.
Come, sir, we will better it in Pisa. *T. S.* 4. 4. 71.
Knowing naught, like dogs, but following. *Lear*, 2. 2. 86.
Bootless home and weather-beaten back. 1 *Hen. IV*, 3. 1. 67.
Come, good fellow, put mine iron on. *A. and C.* 4. 4. 3.
While their hearts were jocund and sublime. *Samson*, 1669.

Of such lines I count in Marlowe's seven plays 66, and in all Shakespeare's 176, but I may have missed one or two. Some further examples are given in Appendix I, E, 1. The much greater proportion in Marlowe's work, or what passes for his, is instructive. The feature is characteristic of a versification not yet perfected, and tends to become less frequent as the playwright's craftsmanship improves. Thus in the *First Part of the Contention betwixt the Two Famous Houses of Yorke and Lancaster*, which is the original of 2 *Henry VI* and was first published in 1594 (reprinted in the *Cambridge Shakespeare*, vol. IX), there are 15 of such lines in the first 1000, and 12 beginning with one or two trochees. In its sequel *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke* (1595), the original of 3 *Henry VI*, I count only 13 pure trochaic lines in the whole. It is interesting to compare

I, now | lookes he | like a | king! (4 ft.)
This is | he that | tooke king | Henries | chaire.
True Trag. 1. 4. 80 f.

with Ay, ; marry, | sir, now | looks he | like a | king !
Ay, ; this is he that took king Henry's chair.
3 Hen. VI, 1. 4. 96 f.

and I, if | thou saie | I to | my request,
No, if | thou saie | no to | my demand.
True Trag. 3. 2. 59 f.

with Ay, if | *thou wilt say* | 'ay' to | my request,
No, if | *thou dost say* | 'no' to | my demand.
3 Hen. VI, 3. 2. 79 f.

My statistics for Shakespeare are: *T.S.* 22; *J.C.* 12; *Rich. III*, *Cor.* 10; *Macbeth*, *Pericles*, 9; 1 *Hen. VI*, *Titus*, *Lear*, 8 each; 1 *Hen. IV*, *Timon*, 6; *T.G.*, *M. M.*, *Rich. II*, 2 *Hen. VI*, *A. and C.*, *Cymbeline*, 5 each; *Hamlet*, *Othello*, 4 each. The other plays show 3, 2, 1, or none; I have noticed none in *M. W. W.*, *M. N. D.*, *Hen. V*. There is a considerable number of similar short lines, 5 for instance in *Lear*. The total of pentapodies and Alexandrines beginning with a trochee, without upbeat and with or without resolution elsewhere in the line, is at least 627. In Chaucer's *Knightes Tale* there are as many as 25, an average of 1 in 10. It will be seen that the distribution of the pure trochaic pentapodies in Shakespeare is highly irregular, and the large number in *Julius Caesar* and *Coriolanus*, the latter a play of exceptionally delicate versification, is certainly surprising. He would seem to have considered the type to be unobjectionable, and even effective, for occasional use, and if there is *enjambement*, the true character of such lines would hardly be noticed when they are delivered on the stage.

If the mere existence of lines of this type does not convince us that their authors, known or unknown, must have scanned all their blank verse on a trochaic base, we must suppose that they adopted it occasionally in pure caprice. The prosodists, however, will not admit the base even for these lines; they tell us that *the first syllable of the opening iambic foot is omitted*! But

we must reply that this, like the device of reversed stress, is only another bit of legerdemain; such an 'omission' is incredible. There is another point too, which seems to have been overlooked, although it is of cardinal importance. It is all very well to *print* "∧ Cóme, | good fél|low," but the words were primarily written to be *spoken on the stage*, and how can the actor indicate the omission before he has begun the line? A bibulous Antony might indeed begin with a hiccup in order to save the poet's face,

uc! Come, good fellow, put mine iron on,

but as a rule even a gasp or a stammer would be hardly in place. Yet without some such elegant trick *the actor must in each case utter a plainly trochaic line.* This, the effect on the ear, is the only test, and there is no escape from it.

2. *The Disyllabic Upbeat* is frequent in all the poets; I have noted 92 instances in *Hamlet*, 93 in *Macbeth*, 98 in *Lear*, 146 in *Othello*, and 153 in *Coriolanus*. More often than not it is followed in Shakespeare by a monosyllabic foot, as in *With a* ⋮ *bare* | *bodkin—Let him* ⋮ *go*, ∧ | *Gertrude—With the* ⋮ *Moor*, ∧ | *sayest thou?* Sometimes the upbeat, whether single or double, takes a slight stress, as in

Dear ⋮ general, I never gave you cause. *Oth.* 5. 2. 299.
Sir, I ⋮ love you more than words can wield the matter.
Lear, 1. 1. 56.

In Swinburne's verse, owing to his love for resolutions, the double upbeat is very common.

3. *The Irrational Long* sometimes takes a slight emphasis, as in the examples given on p. 39 and in the following:

Of ⋮ whose trûe-fix'd and | resting | quali|ty. S.
Balm of hûrt | minds, great nature's second course. S.

In the 4th or 5th foot it sensibly retards the line:

Have I ⋮ given | fire and | rifted | Jove's stoût | oak. S.
Rather to | show a | noble | grace to | both pârts‖. S.
Bóre a bright | gólden | flŏwer, but | nót in | thís soil‖. M.

4. *The Full Measure.* Completion of the last foot is normal, and resolution of it occurs in Shakespeare with some frequency; my list shows over 800 examples:

O ⁝ monstrous | act! ∧ | —Villany, | villany, | *villany!* ‖.
Oth. 5. 2. 190.

But his ⁝ neat | cookery! He | cut our | roots in | *characters* ‖.
Cymb. 4. 2. 49.

The beast
With ⁝ many | heads ∧ | butts me away. ∧ | *Nay, mother,* ‖
Where is your ancient courage? *Cor.* 4. 1. 1 ff.

And ⁝ you our | no less | loving | son of | *Albany* ‖.
Lear, 1. 1. 43.

The rhythm of such lines would obviously be spoiled by scanning them as Alexandrines, as for instance,

O ⁝ monstrous | act! ∧ | —Villany, | villany, | villany! ∧ ‖.

5. *Resolution.* Resolution of the trochee into a trisyllabic or quadrisyllabic foot has been a feature of our heroic line from its infancy. Even in the crude and wooden verse of Sackville and Norton's *Gorboduc* there is an average of 3 triplet feet in every 17 lines of Act i; for example,

The ⁝ realme di vided | *into two* | sondry | partes.
Stoode in the | likeli *hode to pos*|sesse the | whole.

In Act iv there is a quadrisyllabic,

With ⁝ Serpentes | girt, ∧ | *carying the* | whip of | ire;

and the rhythm produced by a monosyllabic 2nd or 3rd foot followed by a resolution is a favourite one of the authors:

Neither, my | *sonne;* ∧ | *such is the* | froward | will,
The ⁝ person | *such,* ∧ | *such my misse*happe and | thine.
My ⁝ lords, I | thank you | *all.* ∧ | *This is the* | cause*.

* Here and elsewhere I dwell on the frequency of resolutions in the Elizabethan poets because there is a school of Shakespearian scholars who would minimise or even abolish them from his plays, either by 'slurring'

In Chaucer's *Prologue* there is an average of more than one resolved foot to every five lines, and in *Lear*, Act i, there are 147 in 157 lines. A feature which, judging by their efforts to abolish it, was peculiarly displeasing to the editors of the First Folio and is also to some recent editors and prosodists, is quite common in Shakespeare and even commoner in Milton—that is, resolution of the 4th foot, as in

O: bey and | be attentive. | *Canst thou re*|member ‖. S.
Of : ófficer and | óffice, | sét áll | *hearts in the* | státe ∧ ‖. S.
Look where he | goes, even | now, ∧ | *out at the* | portal ‖. S.
Néxt, your | són gone, and | hé most | *violent* | aúthor ‖. S.

The resolution may take any of the forms mentioned on p. 35. It is important to notice that when an irrational in a resolved foot is heavy, rhythmical utterance of the words is often assisted either by a pause in the sense or by the pause one naturally makes after a word to give it emphasis, as after *sir* and *midnight* in

Dóst thou | heăr?—Your | *tăle, sir, would* | cúre | deăfness. S.
Thou : cálledst me | úp at | *mĭdnight to* | fétch | dĕw. S.

Unless one is watchful, a resolution may easily escape notice, as for instance in

O, : this is the | *poison of* | deep | grief; it | springs. S.
Not | *poison* | *of deep* | *grief.*

Taking Shakespeare's plays as a whole, about one line in 22 contains two or more resolutions, but the average for individual plays varies enormously. Thus in a chronicle play such as

or 'quasi-suppression' of vowels, or by their actual elision. They maintain that the Shakespearian pronunciation was *will'ny, cook'ry, conf'dent, del'cate, duch'ss, Jess'ca, Im'gen, Prime* (*Priam*), *Alcibi'des, Alb'ny*, and the like. The belief is a mere fantasy based on no solid grounds, and will no doubt ere long die a natural death. The curious thing is that those who hold it have not perceived that this clipped pronunciation makes much of Shakespeare's verse into stuff that is not worth uttering.

3 *Henry VI* we find only one such line in 52⅞, while in *Coriolanus*, a beautifully versified play, the average is as high as 1 in 8⅞. The later plays generally vary between 1 in 10 and 1 in 17, with exceptions showing a lower number. Lines with three resolutions occur often enough to cause no surprise, about 6 to a play on an average; but *Othello* has 24, and *Coriolanus* 33. The two following show four resolutions:

*Dearly, my | delicate | Ariel. | Do not ap*proach. *Temp.* 4. 1. 49.
Hold thee, from | this, for | *ever. The* | *barbarous* | *Scythian.*
Lear, 1. 1. 118.

Of course he would not have written such galloping verse unless the effect were modified by a strong stop within the line. The resolutions here are divided in each case between two sentences, and belong in fact to distinct verse-measures.

In Milton, who as a rule composes the resolved foot of syllables very easy to say, the feature is even commoner than in Shakespeare's plays taken as a whole. *Paradise Lost*, Bk. 1, shows an average of one in every two lines. In the opening line there are two:

Of : mán's | *first disobédience* | and the | frúit,

and occasionally there are three in one line, as in

Fled : over | *Adria* | *to the Hesperian* | fields.

Tennyson has an unmistakable liking for the resolved foot, and is at pains to introduce it for effect:

In : *cataract* | after | *cataract* | to the | sea.
Rose-red with | beatings | *in it as* | if alive

(a line of which I hope it is not merely fanciful to suppose that the syllables *in it* are meant to suggest the "beatings").

Prick'd with incredible | *pinnacles* | into | heaven.
As : *lovelier* | than whatever | *Oread* | haunts.
Idalian | Aphrodite | beautiful.
And : flashing | round and | round, and | *whirl'd in an* | arch.
O : *Galahad*, | and O | *Galahad*, | follow | me.

Swinburne's love for the resolved foot is a veritable passion. In one passage in *Atalanta in Calydon* there are 119 in 167 lines (7 in 10), and in another as many as 90 in 104 lines. Nineteen of these lines have two resolutions each, and in the former passage there are three having three each, and in the latter one such line. The effect produced by this accumulation is further heightened by the presence of quadrisyllabic feet, as in

Seeing thine | head | *glitter and thine* | hand | burn its | way, (Alex.)

and by frequent double upbeats. The line has in fact become almost lyric, and so little preserves the character of the Shakespearian line, to say nothing of Milton's, that it might seem to belong to another metre. For although the blank verse of Shakespeare and Milton is indeed continually beautified by rhythms essentially lyric*, Swinburne's line exhibits this variation of the norm to an extent far beyond that which in their judgement marked the desirable limit. Nevertheless it is not weaker. On the contrary, there is a gain of strength in a new direction, and the total result of this animation of the measure, reinforced as it is by frequent alliteration, is remarkable. There are plenty of stately and majestic lines in the play, yet not enough to stamp their character predominantly upon the whole; and while these lend dignity and nobility to the dialogue, the new line, which is full of emotion, conveys by its frequency an overruling impression of impetuosity and passion. Its effect is something like that of the galliambic. Examples are,

Sunlike with | *many a* | *Nereid's* | hair, and | moved.
The ⁝ whŏle whīte | Eúxine | clăsh'd to *gĕther and* | fĕll
Fŭll-moŭthed and | *thŭnderous* | from a | thoúsand | thróats.
For ⁝ there was | *never a* | mother | woman-born
Lŏved her sŏns | *bĕtter; and* | *nĕver a* | quēen of | mén...
Through a ⁝ *heavy and* | iron | *furrow of* | *sundering* | spears.

* See ch. III, pp. 24 ff.

For : *silver nor* | bright | snow nor | *feather of* | foam
Was : *whîter and* | nó gŏld | *heăvier* | than thine | háir.
Where, : hid by | *heavier* | *hyacinth*, | *violet* | buds
Blossom and | burn; and | *fire of* | *yellower* | flowers.
They are : *strong, they are* | *strong; I am* | *broken and* | these pre|vail.

6. *The Quadrisyllabic Foot.* The frequency of this foot in Shakespeare is sufficient of itself to indicate what was his feeling about resolved feet in general. Here are a few statistics of its occurrence: *T. G.* shows 22, *M. M.* 27, *T. S.* 42, *T. and C.* 29, *Cor.* 46, *R. and J.* 41, *J. C.* 30, *Hamlet* and *Lear* 38, *Othello* 47, *A. and C.* 32, *Cymbeline* 49. Altogether the plays exhibit nearly 900. Examples are,

The : curi*osity of* | nations | to de|prive me.
Mumbling of | wicked | charms, ∧ | *conjuring the* | moon.
'Fiery'? | what, ∧ | '*quality*'? *Why*, | Gloucester, | Glouces|ter.
Fiery? the | fiery | duke? ∧ | Tell the hot | duke that—
The : body's | *delicate; the* | tempest | in my | mind.
And : *cry myself a*|wake? that's | false to his | bed, ∧ | is it? ‖.
To : every | several | man ∧ | *seventy-five* | drachmas ‖.

Abbott in his *Shakespearian Grammar* offers two scansions for the last line,

To év'|ry sév'|ral mán | se'nt'-fíve | dráchmas ‖,
To év'|ry sév'|ral mán | sé'nty-|five drách|‖mas.

Thus we are asked to believe that the actor who took the role of the incomparable orator Antony was expected by Shakespeare to deliver this important and weighty line, every several syllable of which should tell, with 'slurring' or 'quasi-suppression' (Abbott) or actual elision (Koenig and others) of three if not four of its vowels,—obscuring especially the precise sum of money to be given, which is equivalent to about £3.

It should be noticed that in Shakespeare the foot is often made easier to say with no loss of rhythm by reason of a necessary or natural pause before the third or fourth syllable. In effect (and purpose) we have two short measures in the line, and the last or two last syllables of the quadrisyllabic foot form an upbeat for the second measure, as in

But his ⁝ neat | *cookery!* ‖ *he* ⁝ cut our | roots in | characters ‖.

In each of the following lines, which would be spoiled by being delivered as Alexandrines, we have a quinquesyllabic foot, and my list shows as many as seventeen in Shakespeare's plays:

So ⁝ *tediously a*|way. The | poor con|demn'd | English.
H. V. 4. Prol. 22.

We ⁝ know thy | charge, ∧ | *Brakenbury, and* | will o bey.
R. III, 1. 1. 105.

As ⁝ *tediously as* | hell, but | flies the | grasps of | love.
T. and C. 4. 2. 13.

Action is | *eloquence, and the* | eyes of the | ignor|ant.
Cor. 3. 2. 76.

Murderous to the | senses? | That con|firms it | home.
Cymb. 4. 2. 328.

The following line of Tennyson shows both a quadrisyllabic and a quinquesyllabic:

Muttering and | *murmuring at his* | ear, ∧ | 'Quick! ∧ | Quick!' ∧ ‖.

In Milton also the quadrisyllabic is frequent; there are 22 in *Paradise Lost*, Bk. II, and 19 in *Samson*:

Wallowing un|wieldy, e|normous | in their | gait.
Irre|*coverably* | dark, ∧ | total e|clipse.

In Tennyson and Swinburne the foot is quite common, and

often a thing of beauty, a point to which Shakespeare seems to have been usually indifferent:

Furrowing a | giant | oak and | javelining. T.
*Ruining a*long the illimitable inane. T.
Galloping of | horses | over the | grassy | plain. T.
Glittering as | wine and | moving | as a | wave. Sw.
Lands : indis*coverable* | in the unheard-of | west. Sw.

Further examples of Shakespeare's quadrisyllabics are given in Appendix I, C.

7. *The Monosyllabic Foot.* (*a*) A stressed syllable protracted to the time-value of a whole foot, usually for emphasis, but not always; or (*b*) the foot formed by a stressed syllable followed by a pause. Both these features are common in the four poets under consideration, as also in Shelley and Browning. My statistics show the following averages: *M. for M.* 1 in 8¾ lines, *Cor.* 1 in 9, *J. C.* 1 in 9½, *Winter's Tale* 1 in 8⅝, *Macbeth* 1 in 7½, *Lear* 1 in 6½, *Othello* 1 in 7, most of the other plays fewer; Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Bks. 1 and 11 and *Samson* 1 in 14, *Comus* 1 in 8; Keats's *Hyperion* 1 in 11; Tennyson's *Idylls* (the whole) 1 in 15, but in *Lancelot and Elaine* 1 in 10½, and in *The Last Tournament* 1 in 10; Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon* 1 in 5. The foot is usually followed or preceded by a resolved foot in order to ease the rhythm, but in Shakespeare a monosyllabic 4th foot is quite common. I give a few examples:

The : very | *stones* | prate of my | whereabouts. S.
Than the : *soft* | myrtle : but | *man*, ∧ | *proud* | man. S.
Which thou : *heard'st* | cry, ∧ | which thou | sawest | sink. S.
A : brother's | murder. | *Pray* | can I | not. S.
Ignominy in | ransom and | *free* | pardon
Are of | *two* | houses : | lawful | mercy. S.
He has : almost | *supp'd*. ∧ | Why have you | left the | chamber? S.

A : *mind* | not to be | changed by | time or | place. M.
Waiting re*venge*. ∧ | Cruel his | eye, but | cast. M.
Where : by the | *blood* | beats, and the | blossom | blows,
And the : *sea* | rolls, and | all the | world is | warm'd. T.
Un : comfort*ed*, ∧ | leaving my | ancient | love. T.
Yea, to the | *bone*, | yea to the | blood and | all. Sw.
And the : *long* | *brand* | blackens, and | *white* | dust. Sw.
And thy : *mouth* | shúddering | like a | *shót* | bírd. Sw.

In the last magnificent line we seem to have reached the high-water mark of the measure's rhythmical possibilities, yet this is what it becomes when scanned on the 'iambo-trochaic' system :

And thý | mouth shúd|dering | líke a | shot bírd ‖.

While common in all Browning's verse, the monosyllabic foot occurs with remarkable frequency in *The Ring and the Book*, and not having been recognised*, has given rise to the notion that the work is full of careless and unmetrical lines. It would be truer to say that, being unsurpassed in his mastery of measures, the poet has here concealed his art with too much success. I give three examples out of eleven occurring in the first hundred lines of *Pompilia* :

I am : just | seventeen | years and | five months | old,
And, : if I lived | one day | more, ∧ | three full | weeks.
He will : seem | hardly | more than a | great | boy.

* See, however, a valuable article by the late Dr A. W. Verrall in *The National Home-reading Union Magazine*, Jan. and Feb., 1908.

CHAPTER V

LYRICS

In the two preceding chapters the trochaic base was found not only to suit the more ordinary rhythms of the blank-verse line, but also to fit and account for its most extreme varieties. It will be seen in the present chapter that this is equally true for our lyric measures. We will again discuss the leading features one by one.

1. *The Upbeat.*

Readiness to admit an occasional upbeat in compositions which are in the main strictly trochaic (that is, without upbeat or resolved feet) marks our verse from its earliest days to its latest. Take the charming 13th century *Cuckoo Song* (from MS. text):

Súmer | ís i|cúmen | ín, ∧ ‖
  Lhúde | síng cuc|cú, ∧ ‖
Groweth | sed and | bloweth | med ∧ ‖
  And : springth the | wde | nu — ∧ ‖.
    Síng, cuc|cú ∧ ‖.
Áwè | bleteth | after | lomb, ∧ ‖
  Lhóùth | after | calve | cu, ∧ ‖
Bulluc | sterteth, | bucke | verteth, ‖
  Murie | sing cuc|cu. Cuc|cu, cuc cu.
Well : singes | thu cuc|cu,
  Ne : swík thu | naver | nu ∧ ‖.
Síng cuc cú nu, | Síng cuc cú,
  Síng cuc|cú, Sing | cúccu | nú.*

* *Lumen*, come: *lhude*, loudly: *wde*, wood: *nu*, now: *awe*, ewe: *lhouth*, loweth: *sterteth*, leaps: *murie*, merry: *swik*, cease.

We find the same practice in the work of the Rhyming Chroniclers, from whom it will be worth while to give three extracts. The first two are by Robert of Gloucester, who flourished in the latter part of the 13th century; the measure is the 6-foot Alexandrine, with occasional 7-foot lines.

(*a*) (in the original spelling):

Énge|lond is a | wél god | lónd, ich | wéne of | échè lŏnd | bést, ∧ ‖
Y-|set in the | ende of the | world, as | al | in the | west ∧ ‖.
The | see | goth hym | al a|bout, he | stont | as an | yle ∧ ‖.

(*b*) from a description of the siege of Antioch:

Robert | first Curt|hose his | good | swerd a | drew,
And | smote ane up the helm, and such a stroke him gave,
That the | skull and | teeth, and the | neck and the | shouldren | he to-|clave.
The Duke | Godfrey | also | good on the | shouldr|en* smote | one,
And for-|clave him | al that | body | to the | saddle a|non.
The | one half | fell a|down a|non, the | other be-|leved | still
In the | saddle, | though it | wonder | were, ∧ | as it | was God's | will;
This | horse bare | forth this | half man a|mong his | fellows each | one,
And | they, for the | wonder | case, in | dread | fell a|non.
Whát for | dread there|of, ∧ | and for | strength of their | fon,
Móre joy | than there | was, was | never i-|see | none.

beleved: lived. *fon*: foes. *isee*: seen.

The third passage is by Robert de Brunne, a canon of the Gilbertine monastery of Brunne or Bourne in Lincolnshire, who wrote in the early part of the 14th century.

* Pronounced *shoulderen*.

(*c*) Meeting of Vortigern and Rowen, the beautiful daughter of Hengist :

Hengist | that day | did his | might
That ⁝ all were | glad, ∧ | king and | knight.
And as | they were | best in ⁝ glading,
And ⁝ well cup-shotten, | knight and | king,
Of ⁝ chamber | Rowen en so | gent,
Be⁝fore the | king in | hall she | went.
A ⁝ cup of ⁝ wine she | had in | hand,
And ⁝ her at tire was | well far and *.
Be⁝fore the | king on | knee | set,
And ⁝ in her language she him gret.
'Láverd | king, was sail!' said | she.
The ⁝ king | asked, | What should | be.
On ⁝ that lang uage the | king ne | couth.
A ⁝ knight her | language | lerid in | youth ;
Brêgh ⁝ hight that | knight, ∧ | born Bret on,
That ⁝ lerid the | language | of Sax on.
This ⁝ Bregh | was the | lati mer,
What she said told Vortiger.
'Sir,' Bregh | said, 'Ro wen you | greets,
And ⁝ king | calls and | lord you | leets.
This is their | custom | and their | gest,
When ⁝ they are | at the | ale or | feast :
Ilk ⁝ man that | loves, ∧ | where him | think,
Shall ⁝ say *Wassail!* and | to him | drink.
He that | bids shall | say *Wassail!*
The ⁝ tother shall | say a gain, *Drinkhail!*
That ⁝ says *Wassail!* ∧ | drinks of the | cup,
Kissing his | fellow he | gives it | up.
Drink⁝*hail!* he | says, and | drinks there of,

* *Farand*, of good appearance ; *Læverd*, lord ; *couth*, understood ; *Bregh hight*, was called Bregh ; *latimer*, interpreter ; *leets*, esteems ; *gest*, manner.

Kissing | him in | bourd and | skof*."
The ⁝ king said, | as the | knight gan | ken,
Drink⁝*hail!* ∧ | smiling on | Rowen|en.
Rówen | drank | as her | list,
And ⁝ gave the | king, ∧ | syne him | kiss'd.

These passages show that in the lines beginning with an unstressed syllable or syllables we have not a new kind of foot, ⏑ –, as our traditional prosody assumes, but merely an introductory beat prefixed to the chosen trochaic metre whenever it happens to be convenient. Two other features of the system set forth in this book are also exemplified, the resolved and the monosyllabic foot. The former arises, as we see, from a breaking up of the long syllable of the trochee into two shorts, and the latter from its prolongation.

Shakespeare's trochaics demonstrate the upbeat with equal plainness:

Tell me where is Fancy† bred,
Or ⁝ in the heart, or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?
Re⁝ply, reply.

It ⁝ is engendered in the eyes;
With ⁝ gazing fed; and Fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies:
Let us all ring Fancy's knell;
I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.
Ding, | dong, | bell ∧ ‖.

And so Milton's:

Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And ⁝ Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe.

* *Bourd* and *skof*, jest and sport.
† *Fancy*: i.e. Love.

Donne's (?) *Time and Absence*, the measures of which in their normal form have upbeat, well illustrates the indifference felt about its omission. There are 7 omissions in the 24 lines, and 4 of these occur in the first stanza.

Absence, | hear thou my | protest ation
A : gainst thy | strength, ∧ ‖
Distance and | length : ∧ ‖
Do what thou | canst for | alter ation, ‖
For : hearts of | truest | mettle ‖
Absence doth | join and | Time doth | settle ‖.

The initial trochee in v. 1 is an exception to the general practice of resolving the first foot when there is no upbeat (see p. 37); but while it more than justifies itself by 'facing off' the important word *Absence*, it is immediately followed by a resolved foot, as we saw to be often the case in the heroic line. It may be added that 10 of the 24 lines are checked, while the rest have the full measure.

In Tennyson's *The Flower* 11 of the 24 lines have an upbeat, and here again we must ask, was he using one kind of foot for one line and its opposite for the next?

Once in a | golden | hour
I : cast to | earth a | seed.
Up there | came a | flower,
The : people | said, a | weed.

Maud is a storehouse of instruction in prosody, and a few statistics may be interesting in connexion both with the point now before us and the employment of resolved feet. The first four sections (161 lines) are in 6-foot checked measures freely resolved. The 1st and 4th sections normally have upbeat; the 3rd (14 lines) admits only two, one single and one double. In the 2nd section 6 of the 11 lines have upbeat. In all four sections there are 72 single upbeats and 40 double, and 49 lines, or nearly

a third of the whole, have no upbeat. Impressed by such lines as

I am ⁝ sick of the | Hall and the | hill, I am | sick of the | moor and the | main...
I will ⁝ bury my self in my self, and the | Devil may | pipe to his | own,

one might suppose that the resolutions and double upbeats are deliberately employed to heighten the emotional tone, and that accordingly they would be found to preponderate in the passionate 1st section; but this is not so. Counting resolutions and double upbeats together, the calmly critical 2nd section heads the list with an average of over 4 to a line, against 3 in the 1st; while the 3rd, in which only two upbeats are admitted, has in resolved feet alone an average of 3 to the line. The conclusion to be drawn, both from this analysis and from the general practice of the poets, appears to be that, while the double upbeat is naturally rare in measures that have few resolved feet, the omission or insertion of upbeat is mainly a matter of convenience; and that the resolved foot, though chiefly employed for its rhythmical effect, often appears by chance, as it were, and has no necessary connexion with heightened feeling.

In the case of some lyrics the rhythm of which is prevailingly dactylic, readers are liable to be so carried away by the swing of the opening lines as not to notice that many which follow begin with an upbeat. I give the first stanza of *Phillada Flouts Me*, from which the gain achieved by the varying of the rhythms will be easily seen.

O what a | plague is | love!
How shall I | bear it?
She ⁝ will inconstant prove,
I ⁝ greatly | fear it.
She ⁝ so torments my | mind
That my ⁝ strength | faileth,

And ; wavers | with the | wind
As a ; ship | saileth.
Please her the | best I | may,
She ; loves still | to gain'say,
A ; lack and | well-a-day!
Phillada | flouts me.

The old Ballad Metre especially is a snare, and there is even a work on English prosody in which we are told to read every line of Drayton's *Agincourt* with a stress on the first syllable! I give the first and fourth stanzas:

Fair stood the | wind for | France,
When ; we our | sails ad|vance;
Nor ; now to | prove our | chance
Longer will | tarry.
But ; putting | to the | main,
At ; Caux, the | mouth of | Seine,
With ; all his | martial | train,
Landed King | Harry.

• • •

And ; turning | to his | men,
Quoth our brave | Henry | then:
'Though they be | one to | ten
Be not a|mazèd!
Yet have we | well be|gun:
Battles so | bravely | won
Have ; ever | to the | sun
By ; Fame been | raisèd!'

Longfellow's *Skeleton in Armour*, which is in the same metre, shows the same variety in the rhythms:

And ; as to | catch the | gale
Round ; veered the | flapping | sail,
'Death!' was the | helmsman's | hail,
'Death without | quarter!'

The first line of Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade* is often delivered without the double upbeat which it must have, since when the phrase "half a league" is first used the stress must be on "league"; only when the league has been introduced to us, is it possible to say, as in the second line, "hálf a league."

Half a ⁝ leágue, half a | leágue,
Hálf a league | onward,
All in the | valley of | Death
Rode the six | hundred.

Since the poem is such a favourite, it may be added that the sudden alterations in the length of the lines is also a trap for the unwary. Thus the fourth stanza begins with three tripodies (our lyric measure β), which are followed by two dipodies (our a):

Flash'd all their | sabres | bare, ∧ ‖
Flash'd as they | turn'd in | air ∧ ‖
Sabring the | gunners | there, ‖
Charging an | army, while ‖
All the world | wonder'd.

Now that we may be considered finally to have established the upbeat, which, with its obedient appearances and disappearances, is a sort of prosodic Ariel, and no less useful than that obliging sprite, it will be convenient to give a classification of our lyric measures. The tabulation, it will be seen, has become extremely simple.

A. Triple Measures*.

1. *Trochaic Measures*: (*a*) without upbeat; (*b*) occasionally admitting upbeat. These are usually tetrapodies. Both forms admit resolved feet, but in its purest form (*a*) shows none, as in the Threnos of *The Phoenix and the Turtle*† and several of

* Fuller description of the measure, as Dipody, Tripody, etc., and whether full or checked, is not here in question.

† Usually printed with Shakespeare's works, but perhaps written, as some think, by R. Barnfield.

Herrick's poems. Shakespeare has left us one charming song so written at the beginning of Act iv of *Measure for Measure*, but this is, I think, his only specimen. Dumain's billet-doux in *Love's Labour's Lost*, however, comes very near, showing but one resolution, "Juno's self an *Ethiope* were." I give the song as no doubt it should be printed, with "Bring again" and "Seal'd in vain" in separate lines:

Take, O take those lips away
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again;
Seals of love, but seal'd in vain,
Seal'd in vain.

2. *Anacrustic Measures*: measures taking upbeat in their normal form, but omitting it at will, and with only occasional resolutions. An extract from Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale* may be taken as an illustration:

My ⁝ heart | aches, and a | drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull | opiate | to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But ⁝ being too | happy in thine happiness, –
That ⁝ thou, ∧ | light-winged | Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious | plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of | summer in | full-throated ease.
O, for a | draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long | age in the | deep-delved earth,
Tasting of | Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth!

O, for a | beaker | full of the | warm | South,
Full of the | true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away in|to the | forest dim.

The last line is an Alexandrine, added with admirable effect. For the construction of the stanza see ch. VII, p. 92.

3. *Dactylic* Measures*: measures with frequent resolutions and with or without upbeat, which, if present, is often disyllabic. For example:

Are : *thusa a*|rose
From her : couch of | snows
On the : *Acrocer*|*aunian* | mountains,—
From : *cloud and from* | crag
With : *many a* | jag,
Shepherding | her bright | fountains.
She : *leapt down the* | rocks,
With her : rainbow | locks
Streaming a|mong the | streams;—
Her : *steps paved with* | green
The : *downward ra*|vine
Which : *slopes to the* | western | gleams;
And : *gliding and* | springing
She : *went, ever* | singing
In : *murmurs as* | soft as | sleep;
The : *Earth seemed to* | love her,
And : *Heaven smiled a*|bove her,
As she : *lingered to*|wards the deep.

* This designation indicates the Triplet Dactyl; we have no measures which employ the true 4-time dactyl.

B. **Quadruple Measure.** The only one employed is

4. *The Anapaestic Measure.* In this the true anapaest is used, for which see ch. I, pp. 4 and 6, and ch. VI.

In connexion with Trochaics an interesting question calls for decision: how are we to describe such poems as *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*? Are they, as our prosodists say, a mixture of trochaics with the measure, say, of *In Memoriam*, or is there in intention a difference between the measure of Milton's

And Laughter holding both his sides,

and that of Tennyson's

When Science stretches forth her arms—?

In other words, may we mark off '1 (*b*)' of the Table as a separate class—'Trochaic admitting Upbeat'? The point may be decided, I think, by the nature of the *initial foot of the lines without upbeat* in each poem. When an 'anacrustic' measure loses its upbeat, the initial foot is almost invariably resolved, as we found was the case with the heroic line. The following stanza from *In Memoriam* exemplifies the regular practice:

Fair ; ship, that from the Italian shore
Sailest the | placid ocean-plains
With ; my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full | wings, and waft him o'er.

In the whole poem I count 72 lines without upbeat, but of these only one begins with an unresolved foot (cxxix):

Knówn and | únknown ; | húman, dívine.

See also the extract from Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale* on p. 65 above. In a set of trochaics, on the other hand, such resolved initial feet are comparatively rare. Thus in *L'Allegro* of the 67 lines without upbeat only 12 show an initial resolution, as *Under the* | *hawthorn in the glade*. In *Il Penseroso* the disproportion, although not so marked, is still maintained: of the 37 lines without upbeat only 11 begin with a resolved foot. In

Comus there are some 200 4-foot lines; of these 119 have no upbeat, only 10 of which begin with a resolution. In the three poems, therefore, we have a total of 223 lines without upbeat, but only 33 initial resolutions. This is sufficient to establish Milton's practice, and the evidence of other poets is in accord*. The necessary conclusion seems to be that the lines with upbeat should be classed not under (2) as 'anacrustics,' but under (1. *b*) as 'trochaic with upbeat': the upbeat is in them an *accretion*. The reader might perhaps have been content, as I should be myself, to rely on the simple argument that the lines of the couplets of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* must have been intended by the poet to be homogeneous, and to say that, since the lines without upbeat are undeniably trochaic, the others must be also; but it seemed better to set the matter finally at rest by the analysis given above. We now see that we must without hesitation describe any similar poem or passage as being (to use the proper prosodic term) a 'system of trochaics.' They are properly described under (1. *b*), and the section is justified as distinguishing a recognisable class.

Of course in elaborated stanzas trochaics may be found in combination with anacrustic measures just as dactylics are, and for the same obvious reasons. Thus the second chorus of Shelley's *Hellas* begins with four pure trochaic tetrapodies and continues with anacrustic tripodies and pentapodies:

Worlds on worlds are rolling ever
From creation to decay,
Like the bubbles on a river
Sparkling, bursting, borne away.
But ⁝ they are still immortal
Who, ⁝ through birth's orient portal

* See especially the passage from Robert de Brunne on p. 59; of the 13 lines without upbeat only 2 begin with a resolved foot. In Shelley's *Lines written among the Euganean Hills* the proportion is 17 cases of resolution to 335 of non-resolution.

And ; death's dark chasm hurrying to and fro,
Clóthe their un ceasing | flight
In the ; brief | dust and | light
Gathered a|round their chariots as they go ;...

In such long stanzas doubtful cases need not trouble us more than they troubled the poet. It may be added that Tennyson's *Lilian* is worth consulting in this connexion.

2. *The Double Upbeat.*

The double upbeat naturally occurs with greatest frequency in measures that are otherwise freely resolved, as in

Round the ; feet of the | day and the | feet of the | night. Sw.

But it is quite common in the ordinary anacrustic metres :

Deep on the | convent-roof the | snows
Are ; sparkling | to the | moon :
My ; breath to | heaven like | vapour | goes :
May my ; soul | follow | soon !

Here the iambic system must scan either *Máy my* or *May mý*, in either case giving a false emphasis and missing the indispensable stress on *soul*. In so scrupulously measured a work as *In Memoriam* there are 7 instances, as

And the ; great | Aeon sinks in blood,

and resolution of the upbeat is found even in trochaics ; there are, for instance, 6 examples in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. Herrick's *Anacreontike* (no. 540, Pollard's edition) is a curious and perhaps unique instance of a poem every odd-numbered line of which has a double upbeat, while the others have none :

Born I ; was to be | old,
And for to | die here :
After ; that, in the | mould
Long for to | lie here.

But be:fore that day | comes
Still I be | bousing,
For I : know in the | tombs
There's no ca|rousing.

3. *The Irrational Long.*

Since we have so few truly short syllables in English, this feature occurs in almost every line of our verse, and cannot be excluded even from the resolutions of freely resolved measures. When the vowel itself is short, the multiplication of consonants will nevertheless often make a syllable heavy :

Come with bŏws | bent and with | emptying of | quivers. Sw.
O that mán's | heart were as | fire ánd coŭld : spring to her. Sw.

The skill with which Swinburne usually avoids awkward irrationals in resolved feet is remarkable. Shelley, although his ear was as delicate, is less scrupulous, and gives us many more ; sometimes the syllable is unpleasingly heavy, as *bask* in the line,

And : Ĭ ăll the | whĭle băsk in | heăven's blŭe | smĭle.

Nevertheless the natural voice-pauses make utterance of such a line quite easy, and the broad fact remains, that for us quantity is altogether a secondary matter as compared with stress.

4. *Completion of the Last Foot.*

As for blank verse and the heroic couplet, so for lyrics the checked line is found to be preferable as the staple form of our measures. Poems wholly composed in full measure are very rare, a fact partly due no doubt to the difficulty of finding a sufficiency of disyllabic rimes. Mrs Browning's *Cowper's Grave* is an example, and Scott's *Coronach* is another ; in this the alternation of single and double upbeats may be noted.

He is : gone on the | mountain, ||
He is : lost to the | forest, ||
Like a : summer-dried | fountain, ||
When our : need was the | sorest ||.

The ⁝ font, reappearing, ‖
From the ⁝ raindrops shall | borrow, ‖
But to ⁝ us comes no | cheering, ‖
To ⁝ Duncan no | morrow! ‖.

The commonest use of the full measure is in the odd-numbered lines of the ordinary 4.3.4.3 and 3.3.3.3 stanza. In the 3.3.3.3.6 stanza of Shelley's *Skylark*, the norm of which has the 2nd, 4th and 5th lines checked, it is once adopted for all the lines with an extremely beautiful effect:

Higher | still and | higher ‖
From the | earth thou | springest ‖
Like a | cloud of | fire; ‖
The ⁝ blue | deep thou | wingest, ‖
And ⁝ singing | still dost | soar, and | soaring | ever | singest ‖.

As an occasional variety, completion of the last foot may appear in any checked measure, even in trochaics, in which it is least often found. Thus we have in *L'Allegro*,

In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy | cunning,
The melting voice through mazes | running.

5. *The Resolved Foot.*

The ordinary trisyllabic resolution, dear to everyone with an ear for its rhythmic beauty from the time of poetry's first beginnings, has been sufficiently illustrated in the preceding pages. I will only point out here that the fact that it *is* a natural resolution or breaking-up of the foot – ⏑, and nothing else, is proved by its occurrence in a *trochaic* system, such as, for instance, that of *L'Allegro*. Take the line

Through the | high wood | *echoing* | shrill.

Clearly the syllables *echo-* are a resolution of the long syllable of the trochee that we should have had if Milton had written the less agreeable | *ringing* | *shrill*.

The quadrisyllabic resolution is common enough to cause no surprise even in strictly measured compositions. Thus we find in Milton's *Ode on the Nativity*,

Whispering new | joys to the | mild | ocean.
Answering the | stringed | noise.

In Wordsworth's sonnet *Inside of King's College Chapel, Cambridge*, it is used with studied effect :

—that branching roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering—and | wandering | on as | loth to | die.

Shakespeare gives in a song,

The ⁞ poor | soul sat | *sighing by a* | sycamore | tree.
Oth. 4. 3. 39.

And Middleton (?) in the interpolated trochaics in *Macbeth*,

Meet me in the | morning : | thither | he. 3. 5. 16.
I am for the | air ; this | night I'll | spend. *ib.* 20.

In Memoriam, for all its severity, admits three :

Treasuring the | look it | cannot | find.
The ⁞ old | *bitterness a*|gain, and | break...
Memories of | bridal, | or of | birth.

In Swinburne quadrisyllabics are numerous:

The ⁞ wind-swift | *warriors of* | England, who | shoot as with | shafts of the | sun.
Roll ⁞ in on the | herd of the | hurtling | *galleons ; and* | masters and | slaves...
As with ⁞ *severing of* | eyelids and | eyes, as with | *sundering of* | body and | soul.

6. *The Monosyllabic Foot.* This foot, produced either by prolongation of the long syllable of the trochee (⌊ for – ⏑) or by a pause after that syllable (– ∧ for – ⏑), is common in all English verse from the earliest times. It appeared in the passages given

from Robert of Gloucester and Robert de Brunne, and has emerged in other quotations in the previous pages. I give here a few examples of different periods, and more will be found in Appendix II, pp. 104 ff.

Chaucer:

Caste : up, and | axede, 'Who | clepeth | there?'
'Hyt am : *I*,' ∧ | quod this | messa|gere.
For the : love of | *God*, ∧ | tellè | me.
'No,' quod | *he*, ∧ | 'Tellè me | what.'

Shakespeare:

O : mistress | *mine*, ∧ | where are you | roaming?

In *Twelfth Night*:

A : *dieu*, ∧ | goodman | devil,

needlessly obelised in the Globe edition, corresponds to

Cries ah, | há! to the | dévil.

And in *Macbeth*, 4. 1. 6, also obelised and variously emended, we have

Toad, that | under | *cold* | stone.

It is almost brutal to analyse the prosody of the beautiful song in *Twelfth Night*, 2. 4, but it is so full of instruction that we must steel our hearts. I give it in full:

Come a : way, come a *way*, ∧ | death,
And : in sad | cypress | let me be | laid;
Fly a : way, fly a *way*, ∧ | breath;
I am : slain by a | fair cruel | maid.
My : shroud of | white, stuck | all with | yew,
O, pre|pare it! ‖
My : part of | *death*, ∧ | no one so | true
Did : share | it ‖.

Not a ⁝ flower, not a | *flower* | sweet,
On ⁝ my black | coffin | let there be | strown ;
Not a ⁝ friend, not a | *friend* | greet
My poôr ⁝ corpse, where my | bones shall be | thrown :
A ⁝ thousand | thousand | sighs to | save,
Lay me, O, | where ∧ ‖
Sad ⁝ true lover | never | find my | grave,
To ⁝ weep | there ! ∧ ‖.

When one looks at this exquisite thing from a prosodic point of view, the first thing that strikes one is the faultless symmetrical beauty of the form of the stanza, with its perfectly satisfying interchange of the freely resolved measure with the ordinary anacrustic, the two types being carefully arranged so that they shall not occur in a dull regular alternation, while a further and equally charming diversity is achieved by the introduction of the four dipodies. The next thing one notices is the perfect correspondence between the two stanzas in respect of the double and single upbeats, of the absence of upbeat (in the sixth lines), and of the monosyllabic feet ; at every point, for *flower* is doubtless to be regarded as a monosyllable in v. 9, these features all tally. In each stanza the second line has a resolution in the same place, each fifth line is without any, and each seventh line shows one, though the position is varied as an artist would vary it. The sixth line of the second stanza begins with a resolved foot while that of the first does not, but we feel that the variation is even better than an over-scrupulous conformity might have been, and adds another rhythmical grace to the whole. The First Folio, with its habitual insensibility to metre, prints the last four lines of each stanza as two, as it also prints the last lines of the song from *Measure for Measure* quoted above on p. 65. It is important to notice that the last line of the first stanza must be scanned with a monosyllabic foot, " Did ⁝ share | it," since it is plainly intended to correspond with the concluding verse. To

compress the latter into a monopody, "To ⁝ weép there"‖, takes away the pathos of the prolonged word *weep*, and to say nothing of the paltriness of the rime that results, produces a trivial and ineffective finish.

Milton gives us the monosyllabic foot in his trochaics:

And the ⁝ night-raven | sings. *L'Allegro.*
To the ⁝ tann'd | haycock | in the | mead. *ibid.*
With a ⁝ sad | leaden | downward | cast. *Il Penseroso.*
And the ⁝ mute | Silence | hist a|long. *ibid.*

In Donne and other Elizabethans the feature is frequent, as in

Though she were | true | when you | met her,
And ⁝ last | till you | write your | letter.

In the lyric verse of Shelley it seems to occur more often than in that of any other poet:

And the ⁝ weary | Day | turned to his | rest.
Thy ⁝ brother | Death | came, and | cried.
Come ⁝ soon, ∧ | soon.
Now ⁝ spangled with | rare | stars. The | snake,
The ⁝ pale | snake, that with | eager | breath.
But ⁝ she is | mute; for her | false | mate...
Oft in a | dry leaf | for a | boat,
With a ⁝ small | feather | for a | sail.

Tennyson:

Break, ∧ | break, ∧ | break.
Maud, ∧ | Maud, ∧ | Maud, ∧ | Maud.
On the ⁝ white | day; but | robed in | soften'd | light.
With a ⁝ half-glance upon the | sky.
Like ⁝ Indian | reeds | blown from his | silver | tongue.
And ⁝ long | purples | of the | dale.
The ⁝ frail | blue-bell | peereth | over.

Even in so carefully measured a work as *In Memoriam* there are 7 instances, as

On the ⁝ bald | street breáks the | blank | day.
When the ⁝ blood | creeps, and the | nerves | prick.
Thy ⁝ place is | changed; ∧ | thou art the | same.

The opening stanza of Tennyson's great *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* is a striking illustration of what a poet can do by skilful use of those methods of varying the rhythm which we have been considering.

Bury the | Great | Duke ∧ ‖
With an ⁝ empire's | lamen|tation, ‖
Let us ⁝ bury the | Great | Duke ∧ ‖
To the ⁝ noise of the | mourning of a | mighty | nation ‖.

How *right* is the first suggestion of solemnity given by the absence of upbeat from the opening line, with the hint of emotion conveyed by resolution of the first foot; and how admirably does the majestic gravity of the two monosyllabic feet impose itself, like the tolling of a great bell, as the line proceeds. With what skill is the note of emotion slightly reinforced by the double upbeat in the second line, and the recurrence of this with a resolved foot in the third line, while the tolling bell is again unmistakably heard in the repetition of the same words as before in the same monosyllabic rhythm. And with what power the fourth line, like a swelling wave, gathers itself in the great quadrisyllabic foot, which takes the ear with an effect that is not surpassed even by any of those that Tennyson himself has given us.

Swinburne:

Made my ⁝ blood | burn and | swoon
Like a ⁝ flame | rained upon.
With the ⁝ same | wreck and | roar.
At the ⁝ wild | end of | things.
For the ⁝ cool | moss is | thick and | sweet.

Is the ⁝ least | flower whose | life returns.
This ⁝ bird had a | long | bill of | red
And a ⁝ gold | ring above his | head.

Christina Rossetti employs the foot freely:

Óne by | one | slowly,
Áh, how | sad and | slow!
Wail|ing and | praying
The ⁝ spirits | rise and | go.

Cléar | stainless | spirits,
White, as | white as | snow;
Pále | spirits, | wailing
For an | over|throw*.

Browning has been supposed, by many who have studied him but superficially, to be little of an artist in poetic measures; the following passage, however, while instructive for our present purpose, is somewhat striking evidence to the contrary:

Day!
Faster and | more | fast,
O'er ⁝ night's | brim, day | boils at | last;
Boils, pure | gold, o'er the | cloud-cup's | brim
Where ⁝ spurting | and sup|pressed it | lay;
For ⁝ not a | froth-flake | touched the | rim
Of ⁝ yonder | gap in the | solid | gray
Of the ⁝ eastern | cloud, an | hour a|way;
But ⁝ forth óne | wavelet, | then an|other, | curled,
Till the ⁝ whole | sunrise, | not to | be sup|pressed,
Róse, ∧ | reddened, | and its | seething | breast
Flickered in | bounds, grew | gold, then | over|flowed the | world.

It is impossible to leave this wonderful passage without just drawing attention to the consummate art with which the gradual

* *The Ancient Mariner* well illustrates all the varieties of scansion dealt with in this chapter.

increase of the sunlight is suggested by the progressive lengthening of the measures. Beginning with a mere monosyllable, the line is extended step by step until at last, with the final Alexandrine, we are flooded by the spreading splendours of the poetry as sensibly as was Pippa's world with the brilliance of the growing day.

CHAPTER VI

ANAPAESTIC AND IONIC MEASURES ILLUSTRATED*

1. *Anapaestic Measure.*

Poems wholly anapaestic are rare in English, but we have a good example in Macaulay's *Battle of Naseby*, and another in Aytoun's delightfully comic *Lay of Sir Lancelot Bogle*, of which the following stanza is a specimen:

'Thirty ⁝ casks are almost | done, yet the | revel's scarce be|gun;
It were ⁝ knightly sport and | fun to strike | in!'
'Nay, ⁝ tarry till they | come,' quoth | Neish, 'unto the | rum—
They are ⁝ working at the | mum
And the ⁝ gin!'

In *The Revenge* Tennyson combines the anapaestic with the ordinary triple-time measure. In the quotation given, and in those that follow, the anapaestic lines are marked with an asterisk.

At ⁝ Flores in | the A|zores Sir | Richard | Grenville | lay,
And a ⁝ pinnace, | like a | flutter'd | bird, came | flying from | far a|way:
*'Spanish ⁝ ships of war at | sea! we have | sighted fifty-| three!'
*Then ⁝ sware Lord Thomas | Howard: ∧ "Fore | God I am no | coward;

* For the feet and measures see ch. 1, §§ 2 and 3. Poems in 4-time measure are not to be scanned in 4-time dactyls, because the first syllable of such dactyls is never resolved.

* But I : cannot meet them | here, for my | ships are out of | gear,
* And the : half my men are | sick. I must | fly, but follow | quick.
* We are : six ships of the | line; can we | fight with fifty-| three?'

Rudyard Kipling has employed the anapaestic measure more than once with complete success. In his *L'Envoi*, as I read it, the first and third lines of each stanza, except the second and the last, afford perfectly admirable examples; all the other lines are in triple time, with frequent double upbeat and resolutions. The effect of the interchange of the measures here is peculiarly satisfying, as is also that of the monosyllabic feet; and the two features together contribute not a little to make this fine poem what it is.

* There be : triple ways to | take, of the | eagle or the | snake,
Or the : way of a | man with a | maid;
* But the : sweetest way to | me is a | ship's upon the | sea
In the : heel of the | North-East | Trade.
Can you : hear the | crash on her | bows, dear | lass,
And the : drum of the | racing | screw,
As she : ships it | green on the | old | trail, our | own | trail, the | out | trail,
As she : lifts and | 'scends on the | Long | trail—the | trail that is | always | new?

Kingsley's *The Last Buccaneer* is composed of triple-time and anapaestic lines in irregular succession. The freedom with which our poets use the upbeat, whether single or double, is very plainly shown here by the fact that sometimes the triple-time lines have a double, and the anapaestic a single upbeat. I give the opening stanzas:

The : winds were | yelling, the | waves were | swelling,
The : sky was | black and | drear,

•When the ; crew, with eyes of | flame, brought the | ship without a | name
•A ; lóngside the | lást Búcca neer.
Whence ; flies your | ship full | sail be fore so fierce a | gale,
•When all ; óthers drive | bâre ón the | seas ?
•Say, ; cóme ye fróm the | shóre óf the | holy Salva dor,
•Or the ; gúlf óf the | rích Cárrib bees ?

2. *Ionic Measure.*

This is a 3/4 time measure based on the ionic foot ⏑ ⏑ – –, which has a secondary stress on the second long nearly equal to that on the first. When used without upbeat it received from ancient Grammarians, ignorant of the true methods of Greek prosody, the absurd designation 'ionic *a maiore*'; with upbeat (⏑ ⏑ or –) it was called, equally absurdly, the 'ionic *a minore*.' The terms appear to have meant respectively, 'starting from a long syllable' and 'starting from a short.' The two longs may either or both be resolved into two shorts, and the two shorts may be replaced by one long by syncope. The foot may thus, in Greek at least, assume very various forms. The measure is extremely rare in English, but we have an excellent and simple example in the old and familiar song *Villikins and his Dinah*:

– – – – – – – – – – – –
Now as ; Dinah vos | valking in the | garding vun | day,
– – – – – – – – – – – –
Her pa ; pa he came | to her, and | thus he did | say.

The measure is common enough in music, and it need not be supposed that the author of this song knew the name of the one he was using; but we may note once more that the Greeks have left us nothing to invent in the way of metre.

In Greek verse the foot – – ⏑ ⏑ is frequently combined with the di-trochee ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑, which is also equivalent to six shorts*;

* Just as in music bars with $\frac{6}{8}$ rhythm sometimes alternate with bars in $\frac{3}{4}$ rhythm.

and this Browning has done in an extraordinarily skilful and successful employment of the mixed measure in the Epilogue which closes *Asolando*, the last poem that he wrote. The following is the first stanza of this beautiful swan-song:

˘ ˘ – – ˘ ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – – ¯ ‖
At the : midnight in the | silence of the | sleep-time, ‖
– ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ^ ‖
When you set your | fancies free, ‖
˘ – – ˘ – ˘ – – ˘ ˘
Will they : pass to where—by | death, fools think, im-|
– – ¯ ‖
prisoned— ‖
> ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – – ˘ ˘ –
Low he : lies who once so | loved you, whom you | loved
– ¯ ‖
so, ‖
– ˘ – ^ ‖.
—Pity me? ‖.

The upbeat of the fourth line takes a slight stress.

CHAPTER VII

STANZAS

The grouping of lines into stanzas is one of the most important features of the lyric poet's art, and the beauty of the final effect depends enormously on the skill with which this is done; whether it be by variety in the length of the lines and their disposition when varied, or by the arrangement of the recurring rimes, or by all three contributory means. Since the scope of this book does not admit the giving of a complete list of stanzas, a selection has been made of those which are commonest or of chief importance, or which for other reasons seem to claim notice. Two Greek forms have been included, the Alcaic and Sapphic, because they have been reproduced in English.

1. *The Heroic Couplet* consists of two riming anacrustic pentapodies. It was an especial favourite with the poets of the 17th and 18th centuries, and is capable of great dignity; but in what was then regarded as its most perfect form—that is, with few resolutions, only single upbeat, and the exclusion of monosyllabic feet—it is hardly relieved from monotony even by careful variation in the position of the pauses. The following is from Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*:

> A fiery Soul, which, working out its way,
> Fretted the Pigmy Body to decay:
> And o'r-informed the Tenement of Clay.
> A daring Pilot in extremity;
> Pleas'd with the Danger, when the Waves went high
> He sought the Storms; but, for a Calm unfit,
> Would Steer too nigh the Sands to boast his Wit.

The following is from Pope's *Essay on Man*:

Look next on Greatness; say where Greatness lies?
'Where, but among the Heroes and the wise?'
Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,
From Macedonia's madman to the Swede;
The whole strange purpose of their lives to find,
Or make, an enemy of all mankind!
Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,
Yet ne'er looks forward farther than his nose.

In the hands of Swinburne, who employed the couplet for his *Tristram of Lyonesse*, it became a new thing. The effect of the *enjambement*, abolishing the monotony of the wearisome 5-foot lengths, is immediate:

And like the rushing of a ravenous flame
Whose wings make tempest of the darkness, came
Upon them headlong as in thunder borne
Forth of the darkness of the labouring morn
Tristram: and up forthright upon his steed
Leapt, as one blithe of battle, Palamede,
And mightily with shock of horse and man
They lashed together: and fair that fight began
As fair came up that sunrise: to and fro,
With knees nigh staggered and stout heads bent low
From each quick shock of spears on either side,
Reeled the | strong steeds | heavily, | haggard-eyed...

2. *The Classical Elegiac Couplet* is composed of a hexameter (see p. 6) and the same line repeated in the following form, in which it is commonly but falsely called the pentameter:

$$- \cup\cup \mid - \text{ಜ} \mid \llcorner \mid - \cup\cup \mid - \cup\cup \mid - \overline{\wedge} \parallel.$$

The third foot has become monosyllabic by syncopation, and the last is not completed. The fourth and fifth feet are always resolved, and with occasional exceptions, the first also. When

our poets use this second line there is usually a pause after the stress of the third foot, and this is completed as a trochee or trisyllabic foot, as in

Grind on the | wakeful | ear *in the* | hush of the | moonless | nights. T.

Further modifications are the substitution of trochees for the dactyls in any place, and the addition of a single or double up-beat, as in

For I : trust if an | enemy's | fleet came | *yonder* | round by the | hill. T.

We have now the common 6-foot lyric line of our poets, as used for instance in the opening sections of *Maud*. In English the measure is of course to be read in triple time, not in its original quadruple time.

Swinburne has used the couplet thus modified and arranged in 4-line stanzas in his *Hesperia*, which opens as follows:

Out of the | golden remote wild | west where the | sea without | shore is,
Full of the | sunset, and | sad, if at | all, with the | fulness of | joy,
As a : wind sets | in with the | autumn that | blows from the | region of | stories,
Blows with a | perfume of | songs and of | *memories be*loved from a | boy.

The quadrisyllabic in the last line may be noted.

His extremely beautiful poem *Evening on the Broads* opens with nine lines which conform strictly to the classical model, but apparently he found it undesirable, if not impossible, to preserve it through the whole of the 70 couplets. Accordingly in the tenth and twelfth lines, and all but fifteen of the remainder, the syncopation of the third foot of the pentameter disappears, and we also have the other modifications mentioned above. Both

the hexameter and the pentameter occasionally receive an upbeat, and sometimes a double one.

Over two shadowless waters, adrift as a pinnace in peril,
Hangs as in | heavy suspense, ∧ | charged with irresolute | light,
Softly the soul of the sunset upholden awhile on the sterile
Waves and | wastes of the | land, ∧ | half repossessed by the night.

* * * * * 4

Slowly the semblance of death out of heaven descends on the deathless
Waters: | hardly the | light, ∧ | lives on the | face of the | deep— 8

Hardly, but here for awhile. All over the grey soft shallow
Hover the | colours and | *clouds of the* | twilight, | void of a | star.
As a ⁝ bird unfledged is the broad-winged night, whose winglets are callow
Yĕt, but | soon with her | *plumes will she* | cover her | brood from a|far.

The concluding couplets are exquisitely musical:

And the sunset at last and the twilight are dead: and the darkness is breathless
With fear of the wind's breath rising that seems and seems not to sleep:
But a sense of the sound of it alway, a spirit unsleeping and deathless,
Ghost or God, evermore moves on the face of the deep.

In the examples from Swinburne the hexameter always has the full measure, but far more commonly the checked form is used, as in Browning's *Abt Vogler*:

But ⁝ here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,
Ex⁝istent behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are!
And I ⁝ know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
That ⁝ out of thrĕe | sounds he | frame, not a | fourth | sound, but a | star.

3. *Terza Rima.* This extremely beautiful stanza is that used by Dante in *La Divina Commedia.* It is formed of three full and normally anacrustic pentapodies, with rimes carried on from stanza to stanza in a peculiar manner: *aba, bcb, cdc, ded,* and so on. There is no necessity for the sense to end with the stanza, and it frequently does not. The measure has been almost entirely avoided by English poets, and wisely; for it is best suited to a long poem, and the task of finding an extended variety of disyllabic rimes in threes, to which Italian readily lends itself, would be one of considerable difficulty. The alternative is to check the line. This Shelley has done, but in spite of the beauty of the poetry, the true music of the measure is thereby lost. Another departure from the Italian model is that only by exception does he close sentence and stanza together. He has employed the measure in four poems; the following is the opening of *The Triumph of Life*:

Swift as a spirit hastening to his task
Of glory and of good, the Sun sprang forth
Rejoicing in his splendour, and the mask

Of darkness fell from the awakened Earth—
The smokeless altars of the mountain snows
Flamed above crimson clouds, and at the birth

Of light, the Ocean's orison arose,
To which the birds tempered their matin lay.
All flowers in field or forest which unclose

Their trembling eyelids to the kiss of day...

4. Swinburne's *On the South Coast* is written in effective and pleasing 3-line stanzas, the lines of which are octapodies freely resolved and with internal rimes:

Hills and valleys where April rallies his radiant squadron of
flowers and birds,

Steep strange beaches and lustrous reaches of fluctuant sea that
the land engirds,
Fields and downs that the sunrise crowns with life diviner than
lives in words.

A striking contrast in *rhythm* may be noted here. That of the first line and a half, as far as "lustrous reaches," is markedly trochaic; the other line and a half fall into an equally marked iambic rhythm.

5. *The Stanza of "In Memoriam."* This differs from the common 4.4.4.4 stanza with upbeat in the rearrangement of the rimes as *abba*, instead of *abab*. The form is much older than Tennyson, though he was the first to see how beautiful it might be made:

Come then, pure hands, and bear the head
That sleeps or wears the mask of sleep,
And come, whatever loves to weep,
And hear the ritual of the dead.

6. In *Relics* Swinburne has an effective 4-line stanza which I do not remember to have seen elsewhere. It is an anacrustic pentapody with the rimes arranged after the manner of the *Terza Rima*, *aaba*, *bbcb*, *ccdc*, and so on:

This flower that smells of honey and the sea,
White ⁝ laurustine, ∧ | seems in my | hand to | be
A white star made of memory long ago
Lit in the | heaven of dear times dead to me.

A ⁝ star | out of the skies love used to know
Here ⁝ held in | hand, a stray left yet to show
What flowers my heart was full of in the days
That are long since gone down dead memory's flow.

7. Struck, as doubtless many others have been, by the noble rhythm of the opening words of the 137th Psalm, he has made it the foundation of a stanza of great dignity, and a poem of

exceptional beauty and grandeur, *Super Flumina Babylonis*. The stanza is 5.2.5.2, with double upbeat always for the longer lines, but rarely for the shorter. Each kind of line gains enormously from its contrast with the other in length and rhythm. As in the first line, the actual words of the Psalm, so in all the odd-numbered lines the first two feet are resolved and the rest are not.

By the ⋮ waters of | Babylon | we sát | down and | wept,
Remembering thee,
That for ⋮ ages of | agony | hast en|dured, and | slept,
And wouldst not see.

By the ⋮ waters of | Babylon | we stoód | up and | sang,
Considering thee,
That a ⋮ blast of de|liverance | in the | darkness | rang,
To set thee free.

8. The 4-line stanza of Tennyson's *Dream of Fair Women* (5.5.5.3) suits its subject admirably; the 5-foot line was required for dignity, while the short line prevents the stanza from being overweighted:

The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom ~~which~~ beams divine:
All night the splinter'd crags that wall the dell
With spires of silver shine.

9. A favourite and effective 5-line stanza is produced by adding to a quatrain of 4 or 3 feet, with rimes *abab*, a fifth line which rimes with either of the preceding. The extra line may come in the 4th or 5th place, so that we get *ababa*, or *ababb*, or *abaab*. Browning seems to be especially fond of the stanza. The example is from Swinburne's *Tenebrae*:

In the ⋮ manifold sound remote,
In the ⋮ molten murmur of song,
There ⋮ was but a | sharp sole | note
Alive on the night and afloat,
The cry of the world's heart's wrong.

10. The length of the lines in a 6-line stanza varies considerably, as does the arrangement of the rimes. The following, from Tennyson's *The Sisters*, is very effective. The measure is 4-foot anacrustic, but the last line, which with the third forms a 'burden' repeated throughout the poem, is without upbeat or the usual resolution. The rimes are *aabccb*.

I rose up in the silent night :
I made my dagger sharp and bright.
The wind is raving in turret and tree.
As half-asleep his breath he drew,
Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.
Ó the | Earl was | fair to | see !

11. *Rime Royal* is a 7-line stanza composed of anacrustic pentapodies, with rimes *ababbcc*. Chaucer employed it in his *Troylus and Cryseyde*, and it long retained its popularity:

This ilke boor bitokneth Diomede,
Tĭdĕŭs | sone, that doun descended is
Fro Meleagre, that made the boor to blede :
And : thy la dý, wher-so she be, y-wis,
This Diomede her herte hath, and she his.
Wep if thou | wolt, or lef ! For out of doute
This Diomede is inne, and thou art oute !

12. The following example, from Swinburne's *To Walt Whitman in America*, of a 7-line stanza composed of tripodies with rimes *ababccb* is, I think, peculiarly pleasing. A comparison of the two stanzas will be found instructive in the matter of the upbeat and some other points of prosody.

Send but a | song over sea for us, ||
Heart of their | hearts who are | free, ∧ ||
Heart of their | singer, to | be for us ||
More than our | singing can | be ; ∧ ||
Ours, in the | tempest of | error, ||
With no : light but the | twilight of | terror ; ||
Send us a | song over sea ∧ ||.

Sweĕt-|smelling of | pine-leaves and | grasses, ||
And | blown as a | tree through and | through ∧ ||
With the | winds of the | keen mountain-|passes ||
And | tender as | sun-smitten | dew ; ∧ ||
Shârp-|tongued as the | winter that | shakes ∧ ||
The | wastes of your | limitless | lakes, ∧ ||
Wîde-|eyed as the | sea-line's | blue ∧ ||.

Octaves.

(*a*) 13. In the *Monkes Tale* Chaucer uses an 8-line stanza composed of anacrustic pentapodies, with rimes arranged *ababbebc*, which is also used by Spenser in *The Shepheardes Calender* (*June*). The specimen is from Chaucer.

By | verray | force at | Gazan, | on a | nyght,
Maugree Philistiens of that citee,
The | gatès | of the | toun he | hath up | plyght,
And | on his | bak y-caryed | hem hath | hee
Hye | on an | hille, | that men | myghte hem | see.
O noble, almyghty Sampson, lief and deere,
Had thou to wommen nat toold thy secree,
In all this world ne haddè been thy peere!

(*b*) 14. *Ottava Rima.* This, a later invention, has been much more frequently used, as by Byron in *Beppo* and *Don Juan*, and by Shelley in *The Witch of Atlas*, from which last the example is taken. The rimes run *abababcc*.

And whilst the outer lake beneath the lash
Of the | wind's | scourge, | foamed like a | wounded | thing,
And the in|cessant | hail with | stony | clash
Ploughed up the waters, and the flagging wing
Of the | roused | cormorant | in the | lightning | flash
Looked like the | wreck of some wind-wandering
Fragment of | inky thunder-smoke—this haven
Was | as a gem to copy Heaven engraven.

Both Shelley and Byron frequently add liveliness to the stanza by giving the full measure to some of the lines, as to the two last here.

15. *The Spenserian Stanza.* This 9-line stanza, which was invented by Spenser and is used in his *Faerie Queene*, is the same as the Chaucerian octave mentioned above with the addition of an Alexandrine at the end*. Shelley adopted it for *Adonais*. The example is from Spenser : rimes *abab bcbcc*.

The Sarazin sore daunted with the buffe
Snatcheth his sword, and fiercely to him flies;
Who well it wards, and quyteth cuff with cuff:
Each others equall puissance envies,
And through their iron sides with cruell spies
Does seeke to perce : repining courage yields
No foote to foe. The flashing fier flies
As from a forge, out of their burning shields,
And streames of purple bloud new dies the verdant fields.

Stanzas of more than nine lines are, with the exception of the Sonnet, too various and irregular to lend themselves to classification. Attention may, however, be drawn to the extremely beautiful 10-line stanza of Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, from which a quotation was given above on p. 65. The construction of the stanza is similar to that of a sonnet, but with an initial quatrain instead of an octave. The rimes of the last six lines, the sestet, are *cde cde*. Admirable examples of long stanzas are to be found among Tennyson's earlier poems, and of course elsewhere in his works and those of other poets.

16. *The Sonnet.* This, which has been a favourite form of composition since its first appearance, is a complete poem consisting of fourteen pentapodies. In its original Italian form, by

* It was of this stanza that Pope jeeringly wrote,
A needless Alexandrine ends the song
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.

common consent regarded as the best, the whole is divided into an octave and a sestet, the octave being made up of two quatrains, and the sestet of two tercets. The rimes of the octave run *abba abba*, but those of the sestet may be variously arranged as *cde dcd—cde cde—cde dce—cdd cde—cde eed*. All these arrangements are found in Milton and Keats, and Keats also gives once *cde dec*. The first three are the most common. To give the same rime to the last two lines is considered objectionable, as resembling the conclusion of an epigram. There should be pauses in the sense at the end of the octave and the first tercet, but English poets who have employed this Italian form are largely indifferent to them, although the feature is of no little importance to the general effect. If, as is most frequently the case in Mrs Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, even the pause at the end of the octave is not observed, the sonnet as a whole becomes somewhat formless. The rimes of the sestet in the following, Keats's fine sonnet *On first looking into Chapman's Homer*, are *cde dcd* :

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne ;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold :
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken ;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

The sonnets of Wordsworth, who wrote an enormous number, and those of Tennyson, and Swinburne follow the Italian model.

The English or Shakespearian form, as it is called because used by him, consists of three quatrains and a couplet, the rimes being *abab*, *cdcd*, *efef*, *gg*. The following is Shakespeare's 54th:

O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odour which doth in it live.

The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their masked buds discloses:

But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwoo'd and unrespected fade,
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made:

And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall fade, by verse distills your truth.

The monosyllabic and quadrisyllabic in the last line but one may be noted.

17. The two following are classical stanzas of Greek origin, the former having been invented by Alcaeus, and the latter by Sappho. Neither is easy to handle in English because the resolved feet must appear in the places assigned and in no other, and the upbeat may not be omitted or inserted at will—rules which, as we have seen, are quite foreign to the spirit of our verse, and which our language makes it difficult to observe except in independent lines. It was noted above (p. 45) that the longer measure both of the Alcaic and the Sapphic stanza is one in which the heroic line is liable to fall by an occasional accident, a fact which by itself is sufficient to show that our prosody is at bottom identical with that of the Greeks.

The *Alcaic* is a 4-line stanza composed of two checked pentapodies and two full lines of 4 feet; the first three lines have upbeat, the 4th has none:

$$\overset{>}{\smile} : - \smile \mid - \overset{>}{\smile} \mid \sim \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \wedge \parallel$$
$$\overset{>}{\smile} : - \smile \mid - \overset{>}{\smile} \mid \sim \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \wedge \parallel$$
$$\overset{>}{\smile} : - \smile \mid - \overset{>}{\smile} \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \parallel$$
$$\sim \smile \mid \sim \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \parallel .$$

The following is the first stanza of an entirely successful experiment of Tennyson, though purists might possibly object to the shortening of the initial *e* of *eternity*:

O : mighty-mouth'd in|ventor of | harmon|ies, ∧ ‖
O : skill'd to | sing of | Time or E|terni|ty, ∧ ‖
Gŏd-: gifted | organ-|voice of | England, ‖
Milton, a | name to re|sound for | ages ‖.

18. The *Sapphic*, also a 4-line stanza, is formed of three full pentapodies and a dipody, the *Versus Adonius*, also full; there is no upbeat:

$$- \smile \mid - \overset{>}{\smile} \mid \sim \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \parallel$$
$$- \smile \mid - \overset{>}{\smile} \mid \sim \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \parallel$$
$$- \smile \mid - \overset{>}{\smile} \mid \sim \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \parallel$$
$$\sim \smile \mid - \smile \parallel .$$

Many poets have attempted the measure, but none with such complete success as Swinburne. The following is from his *Sapphics*:

So the | goddess | fled from her | place, with | awful ‖
Sound of | feet and | thunder of | wings a|round her; ‖
While be|hind a | clamour of | singing | women ‖
Severed the | twilight ‖.

APPENDIX I

EXAMPLES OF DEPARTURE FROM THE NORM IN SHAKESPEARE'S BLANK VERSE

A

Alexandrines

Besides the normal pentapody Shakespeare's plays contain many lines of other lengths; these are most commonly of three or six feet, and with much less frequency, of two, one, or four feet. Instances of six-foot lines such as the following, which are not broken by any but slight voice-pauses, are comparatively rare:

And these she does apply for warnings and portents. *J. C.*

Acquire too high a fame when him we serve's away. *A. and C.*

More frequently (we are considering only lines delivered by one speaker) there is a break, and this, according to the original rule for the Alexandrine, should be made by a pause in the 3rd foot, as in

How you were | borne in | hand, how | cross'd, the | instru| ments. *Mac.*

How ⁝ dares thy | harsh rude | tongue ∧ | sound this un|pleasing | news? *R. II.*

Shakespeare, however, as one would expect, makes the break anywhere—as at the end of the 3rd foot, in or after the 4th, or in the 5th:

As ⁝ my two | brothers, | happy! | but most | misera|ble. *Cymb.*

At ⁝ Mari|ana's | house to-|night. Her | cause and | yours. *M. M.*

More than your | lord's de|parture | weep not: | more's not | seen. *R. II.*

To : have them | recompensed as | thought on. | Well, my lord. *W. T.*

And : never | seek for | aid ∧ | out of him'self. Yet | see. *H. VIII.*

A : certain | number, ‖

Though : thanks to | all, ‖ must : I se'lect from | all: ‖ the : rest
Shall bear the business in some other fight,
As cause will be obey'd. *Cor.* 1. 6. 80 ff.

Here the *enjambement* divides the six-foot length between two lines, and we have the period: 2. 2. 3. 6. 3. Sometimes there is a double break, and we get such a charming verse as *Lear*, 2. 2. 180,

Fortune, good | night: ∧ ‖ smile once | more: ∧ ‖ turn thy | wheel! (*a*. 2. 2)

Shakespeare's continual regard for variation of the rhythm is specially obvious in numerous cases where the six-foot line is divided between two speakers, as in the following, where the final foot is resolved:

Should : never | plant in | me.

Cordelia. I | yet be'seech your | majesty ‖. (3. 7)

As a matter of form, it seems preferable to describe and print these as six-foot lines divided into two tripodies, rather than as two distinct three-foot lines.

Many verses which might at first sight look like Alexandrines, and have been regarded as such, are really five-foot lines either (*a*) containing a quadrisyllabic foot, or (*b*) having the last foot resolved, or (*c*) showing neither of these features, but only needing correct scansion. A good example of the last is *A. Y. L.* 3. 5. 42,

I : see no | more in you | than in the | ordinary
Of : nature's | sale-work ‖.

Here Abbott places a needless and unduly cruel stress on *you*, and while rightly taking the line to be of normal length, gives the following wonderful scansion, which postulates the possibility of no less than three 'hypermetrical' syllables:

I sée | no móre | in yoú | than in | the órd‖*inary*.

Examples of apparent Alexandrines which are pentapodies with the last foot resolved are given in the next section, and specimens of the quadrisyllabic foot will be found in Section C.

B

Resolution of the Final Foot

In the following examples, in which prolongation to an Alexandrine would entail a decided rhythmical loss, we have resolution of the final foot:

Had : he been | vanquisher ; | as by the | same | covenant ‖...
Were : rich and | honoura ble ; be sides, the | gentleman ‖...*
And : I must | freely | have the | half of | anything ! ‖
Absolute | Milan. | Me, poor | man, my | library ‖...
In : base ap*pliances*. *This* | outward | sainted | deputy ‖...†
Than : that | mix'd in his | cheek ; 'twas | just the | difference ‖...
I have : cast | off for | ever: thou | shalt, I | warrant thee ‖.
My : thoughts, whose | murder | yet is | but fan tastical ‖...
Thou wilt : prove | his. ∧ | Take him to | prison, | officer ‖.
Some : tricks of | desper ation. | All but | mariners ‖...

The resolution is naturally common with proper names:

The : rarest of | all | women. | Go, Cle omenes, ‖
My : brother and | thý | uncle, | call'd An tonio, ‖
They : all a fire with | me: the | king's son, | Ferdinand, ‖
Hold thee, from | this, for | ever. The | barbarous | Scythian ‖...
They : love and | dote on ; | call him | bounteous | Buckingham ‖.
Is : come from | Caesar ; | therefore | hear it, | Antony ‖.

Altogether there are in Shakespeare's plays over 800 examples of resolution of the final foot.

* Abbott would pronounce here and elsewhere *gent'man* or *gen'man*; but why not Sam Weller's *gemman*, which would be easier still ?

† This line has been supposed to have 7 feet !

C

The Quadrisyllabic Foot

Of the quadrisyllabic foot I have noted about 880 instances. The breaking of the foot by a pause after the second or more frequently the third syllable, as in the lines starred, is common; the last or last two syllables become the upbeat to what is in effect a fresh measure (see pp. 24 ff.). The following are a few examples:

Gentlemen and | friends, I thank you for your pains.
T. S. 3. 2. 186.

*Prettily, me thought, did play the orator. 1 *H. VI*, 4. 1. 175.

Tying him to | aught: so, putting him to rage. *Cor.* 2. 3. 205.

*How ¦ fares the | king and his | followers? Confined together.
Temp. 5. 1. 7.

Ransoming | him, or | pitying, | threatening the | other.
Cor. 1. 6. 36.

To ¦ thread the | postern of a | small | needle's | eye.
R. II, 5. 5. 17.

*Must it be | violent, and as he does conceive. *W. T.* 1. 2. 454.

*And ¦ welcome, | Somerset: I | hold it | cowardice.
3 *H. VI*, 4. 2. 7.

Is ¦ Antony again, ∧ | I will be | Cleopatra. *A. and C.* 3. 13. 187.

*How ¦ now, Horatio! you | tremble | and look | pale.
Ham. 1. 1. 53.

*Thrift, ∧ | thrift, ∧ | Horatio! the | funeral | baked-meats ‖.
Ham. 1. 2. 180.

As to ¦ peace-parted | souls. ∧ | —Lay her in the | earth.
Ham. 5. 1. 261.

*To the ¦ last article: my | lord shall never | rest. *Oth.* 3. 3. 22.

Might ¦ easiliest | harbour | in? Thou | blessed | thing!
Cymb. 4. 2. 206.

Wearying the | hearer | in thy | mistress' | praise.
A. Y. L. 2. 4. 38.

De:fy us | to our | worst: for | as I am a | soldier. *H. V.* 3. 3. 5.

Bold in the | quarrel's | right, ∧ | roused to the encounter.
Lear, 2. 1. 56.

But that the | sea ∧ | mounting to the | welkin's | cheek.
Temp. 1. 2. 4.

*And his : great | person | perish.— | Ariel, thy | charge.
Temp. 1. 2. 237.

D

Lines containing Monosyllabic Feet

The number of monosyllabic feet in a play varies considerably. In *Macbeth* and *Lear* there are as many as 1 in 6½ lines, and in *Othello* 1 in 7; in 1 *Henry VI* only 1 in 35½. The following examples are all from *Macbeth*, which shows 31 in the fourth foot besides those elsewhere in the line.

All : hail, Mac beth ! ∧ | hail to thee, | thane of | Glamis !
Good : sir, ∧ | why do you | start, ‖ and | seem to | fear ∧ ‖. (γ. 2)
Your : children | shall be | kings ∧ ‖.—You shall be | king ∧ ‖.
(3. α)
And : thane of | Cawdor | too : ∧ ‖ went it not | so ? ∧ ‖. (3. α)
Cannot be | ill, ∧ ‖ cannot be | good : ‖ if | ill ∧ ‖. (α. α. 1)
If : good, ∧ ‖ why do I | yield to | that suggestion ? ‖. (1. δ)
Give me your | favour : ‖ my | dull | brain was | wrought. (α. 3)
Might have been | mine ! ∧ ‖ only I have | left to | say. (α. β)
Let not : light | see my | black and | deep desires :
The : eye | wink at the | hand ; ‖ yet | let that | be
Which the : eye | fears, ‖ when : it is | done, to | see.

The last three lines form the Period : 5. γ. ε. 3.

To : be his | purvey or : ‖ but he | *rides* | well ; ∧ ‖
And his : great | love, ∧ ‖ sharp as a | spur, ‖ hath : *holp him*
To his : home be fore us.

Period: 3.2.2.α.β, with quadrisyllabic in β.

Not : cast aside so | soon.—Was the | *hope* | drunk
Where : in you | dress'd yourself? hath it | slept | since?
Upon his | death?—I am | settled, and | bend | up
Each : corporal | agent | to this | terrible | feat.
False : face must | hide what the | false | heart doth | know.
I : dreamt last | night of the | three | weird | sisters.
Was : feverous | and did | shake.—'Twas a | rough | night. (β.2)
Our : tears are | not yet | brew'd.—Nor our | strong | sorrow.
I : drink to the | general | joy of the | whole | table.
(3 resolutions)
Avaunt! and | quit my | sight! let the | earth | hide thee!

E

Lines without Upbeat or Initial Resolution

A complete list of the pentapodies exemplifying one or other of the types included in this section would make a total of about 450, and to these must be added a considerable number of short lines. The significance of the trochaic beginning has been pointed out in ch. IV.

1. *Purely Trochaic Pentapodies.* Of this type I have noted 158 examples, and 7 with only the final foot resolved. The following is a selection from various plays:

Well, sir, here is for your pains. What said she?
Truly, sir, I think you'll hardly win her. *T. G.* 1. 1. 140 f.
Grace go with you, Benedicite! *M. M.* 2. 3. 39.
Gaoler, take him to thy custody. *C. of E.* 1. 1. 156.
Boys, ∧ | apes, ∧ | braggarts, | jacks, ∧ | milksops!
M. Ado, 5. 1. 91.
Stamp'd in gold, but that's insculp'd upon. *M. of V.* 2. 7. 57.

Here editors most unwarrantably print "Stampèd in gold"; the first two Quartos and the Folio give "Stampt...insculpt."

Gentlemen, importune me no further. *T. S.* 1. 1. 48.
Out, you rogue, you pluck my foot awry. *T. S.* 4. 1. 150.
Son, I'll be your half, Bianca comes. *T. S.* 5. 2. 78.
Worse and worse; 'she will not come'! O vile!
T. S. 5. 2. 93.
Youth, ∧ | beauty, wisdom, courage, all. *All's W.* 2. 1. 185.
Nay, 'tis in a manner done already. *K. J.* 5. 7. 89.
Darest with thy frozen admonition. *R. II*, 2. 1. 117.
Is my kinsman, whom the king hath wrong'd. *R. II*, 2. 2. 114.
Rescued is Orléans from the English. 1 *H. VI*, 1. 6. 2.
Am I not Protector, saucy priest? *ib.* 3. 1. 45.
Whéreas | the con|tráry | bringeth | bliss. *ib.* 5. 5. 64.
Peace, ∧ | son! and | show some | reason, | Buckingham ‖.
2 *H. VI*, 1. 3. 117.
Well, sir, | as you | guess, ∧ | as you | guess? *R. III*, 4. 4. 467.
Say, his | long | trouble | now | is | passing. *H. VIII*, 4. 2. 162.
Were you | in my | stead, would you have heard. *Cor.* 5. 3. 192.
Stay! ∧ | speak, ∧ | speak! I | charge thee, | speak!
Ham. 1. 1. 51.
Lends the | tongue | vows: these | blazes, | daughter.
Ham. 1. 3. 117.
Hear, ∧ | nature, hear; dear goddess, hear! *Lear*, 1. 4. 297.
Vengeance! | plague! ∧ | death! con|fusi|on! *Lear*, 2. 4. 96.
One, ∧ | two, ∧ | three: ∧ | time, ∧ | time. *Cymb.* 2. 2. 51.
Twelve year since, Miranda, twelve year since. *Temp.* 1. 2. 53.
This is strange: your father's in some passion. *Temp.* 4. 1. 143.

2. *Lines with the first three feet unresolved.* The following are half-a-dozen of the 22 examples I have noted:

Thanks, ∧ | gentle | uncle. | Come, lords, a way.
M. Ado, 3. 1. 42.
Gentle|men, con|tent ye; | I am re|solved. *T. S.* 1. 1. 90.
Good, ∧ | good my | lord; the | secrets of | nature.
T. and C. 4. 2. 74.

Tut, you | saw her | fair, none | else being | by.
R. and J. 1. 2. 99.
O my | fear interprets: | what, is he | dead? *Oth.* 5. 2. 73.
I have | sixty | sails, ∧ | Caesar none | better. *A. and C.* 3. 7. 50.

3. *Lines with the first two feet unresolved.* Of these my list gives 80. When the last foot is completed and the 3rd foot only resolved, the line becomes a Sapphic, of which I have identified 17, but there may be one or two more. The following are Sapphics:

He has | brave utensils,—for | so he | calls them ‖.
Temp. 4. 1. 170.
Come your | way, sir. | Bless you, good | father | friar ‖.
M. M. 3. 2. 10.
Well, would | I were | gently put | out of | office ‖.
Tim. 1. 2. 207.
I will to-morrow,
And be times I | will, to the | weird | sisters ‖. *Mac.* 3. 4. 133.
Let it | be so: | yet have I | left a | daughter ‖. *Lear*, 1. 4. 300.
Look, who | kneels here! | Flesh of thy | flesh, Thaisa ‖.
Per. 5. 3. 46.

4. *Lines being* – ⏑ | ⏑⏑ | or – ⏑ | ⏑⏑⏑ | . Of these I count 174, but there are probably more. When the last foot is completed and the 2nd foot only is resolved, the line becomes a Hendecasyllabic, of which the following are specimens selected from a list of 31.

Therefore, | know thou, for | this I | entertain thee ‖.
T. G. 4. 4. 75.
Where Balthasar and | I did | dine together ‖. *C. of E.* 5. 1. 223.
Call her | forth, brother; | here's the | friar | ready ‖.
M. Ado, 5. 4. 39.
Now do | thoú watch, for | I can | stay no | longer ‖.
1 *H. VI*, 1. 4. 18.

Mother, | yoú have my | fáther | much offended ‖.
Ham. 3. 4. 10.

You do | climb up it | now : look | how we | labour ‖.
Lear, 4. 6. 2.

APPENDIX II

THE MONOSYLLABIC FOOT IN LYRICS

Although not very common in lyrics of the 16th and 17th centuries, the foot occurs sufficiently often to show that it was at that time a well-established feature of English lyric verse. We have already seen that it was used freely by Robert de Brunne in his trochaics, and a few other examples have been given. The following, I believe, complete the list for the songs and trochaics of Shakespeare's plays :

(*a*) Songs :

Hark, ∧ | hark! Bow-|wow.
Hark, ∧ | hark! I | hear. *Temp.* 1. 2. 382, 384.
But doth | suffer a | sea-change. *ib.* 400.
The god of love,
That sits above,
And : knows | me, and | knows | me. *M. Ado*, 5. 2. 26.
Heavi ly, ∧ | heavi ly. *ib.* 5. 3. 18, 21.
In the : spring | time,
The : only | pretty | ring | time. *A. Y. L.* 5. 3. 20.
And : let me a | canikin | clink, ∧ | clink. *Oth.* 2. 3. 71.

(*b*) Trochaics :

And : breathe | twice and | cry 'so, | so.' *Temp.* 4. 1. 45.
Earth's in crease, ∧ | foison | plenty. *Temp.* 4. 1. 110.
Which : is most | faint : ∧ | now, 'tis | true. *Temp.* Epilogue 3.

Which ⁝ was to | please. ∧ | Now I | want
Spirits to en force, ∧ | art to en chant*. *ib.* 13 f.
Thou for | whom ∧ | Jove would | swear. *L. L. L.* 4. 3. 117.
Swifter | than the | moon's | sphere. *M. N. D.* 2. 1. 7.
Trip we | after | night's | shade. *ib.* 4. 1. 101.
Trip a way ; ∧ | make no | stay. *ib.* 5. 1. 428.
Á̆men. ∧ | So fall | to't :
Rich men sin, and I eat root. *Tim.* 1. 2. 71.

In the *Sonnets* the foot occurs ten times in the first twenty-five, and twenty-two times in the last twenty-five. Averaging these, we get 1 in 22 lines. In *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* it occurs much less frequently. *The Passionate Pilgrim* I—XVI shows 1 in 23 lines, but XVII gives 1 in 11. This last poem will be found remarkably instructive from a metrical point of view.

To the examples from Milton given on p. 75 may be added the following three from the trochaics of *Comus*, and one, the last, from the song in which Sabrina is invoked :

And the ⁝ slope | sun his | upward | beam.
With their ⁝ grave | saws, in | slumber | lie.
The ⁝ nice | Morn on the | Indian | steep.
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The ⁝ loose | train of thy | amber-dropping | hair.

Modern poets, and especially Shelley and Swinburne, employ the foot much more frequently. The next following examples are from Shelley's *Lines written among the Euganean Hills* :

And ⁝ sinks dŏwn, | down, ∧ | like that | sleep.
To ⁝ find | refuge | from dis|tress.
In the ⁝ waters of | wide | Agony.
Be⁝neath is | spread like a | green | sea.
Wilt thou | be, when the | sea-mew.
Twining | *memories of* | old | time*
With ⁝ new | virtues | more sub|lime.

* Note the quadrisyllabic.

And : Sin | cursed to | lose the | wager, ||
But : Death | promised, | to assuage her ||.
Is : lost | over the | grave of | day.
The : loud | flames ascend, and | fearest ||.
In the : south | dimly | island ed.
And : that one | star, ∧ | which to | her.
The : frail | bark of | this lone | being ||.
And : soft | sunshine, | and the | sound
Of : old | forests | echoing | round.

From *Prometheus Unbound*:

My wings are folded o'er mine ears,
My : wings are | crossed | o'er mine | eyes.
A : sceptre of | pale | gold.
To : stay stĕps | proud, o'er the | slow | cloud.
And : all | feel, yet | see thee | never, ||
As : I feel | now, ∧ | lost for | ever.
And we : sail | on, a way, a far.
We have : passed | Age's | icy | caves.
The : shadow of | white | death has | past.

From *Queen Mab*:

Or : is it | only a | sweet | slumber.
And the : clear | silver | tones.

From *The Masque of Anarchy*:

Last came Anarchy; he rode
On a : white | horse | splashed with | blood;
He was : pale | even | to the | lips,
Like Death in the Apocalypse.

In Swinburne's lyrics the foot is, I think, commoner than in those of any other poet. His *The Eve of Revolution* shows 44 in 432 lines, an average slightly over 1 in 10, which is remarkably high for lyric verse. The following are examples from this poem:

Dead : leaves of | sleep, ∧ | thicker than | autumn | leaves.

Till the ⁝ storm | lose its | track.
The ⁝ heights | flash, and the | roots and | summits | shake.
And the ⁝ first | freedom | moved upon the | deep.
And ⁝ anguish of | blind | snows and | rack-blown | rains.
Of their ⁝ dead | days and | nights.
And the ⁝ dead | earth takes | spirit | from thy | sight.
And ⁝ hope is | weak with | waiting, and | swift | thought...
Of the ⁝ blind | Russian | might.
The ⁝ night is | broken | westward ; the | wide | sea.
From its ⁝ sharp | tresses | down the | storm to | lee.
With the ⁝ same | splendour | on thine | helmless | hair.
Who ⁝ made thy | foot | firm on the | necks of | kings
And thy ⁝ soul | somewhile | steadfast— | woe are | we.
On the ⁝ pale | lips of | hope is | as a | spell.
The ⁝ passion of | man's | kind.
To the ⁝ dead | cold damnation | of disgrace.
As a ⁝ heart | burns with | some divine thing | done,
Or as ⁝ blood | burns again.
Italia, the | world's | wonder, the | world's | care.
What shall we ⁝ make of our | heart's | burning | fire.
Soul into | soul, ∧ | song into | song.
Re⁝freshing the | faint | east.

From *A Watch in the Night*:

High ⁝ priest, ∧ | what of the | night?
France, ∧ | what of the | night?

From the sonnet *Cor Cordium*:

O ⁝ HEART of | hearts, the | chalice of | love's | fire.
Dead ⁝ love, ∧ | living and | singing, | cleft his | tomb,
And ⁝ with him | risen and | regent in | death's | room.

From the sonnet *In San Lorenzo*:

Is thine ⁝ hour | come to | wake, O | slumbering | Night?

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